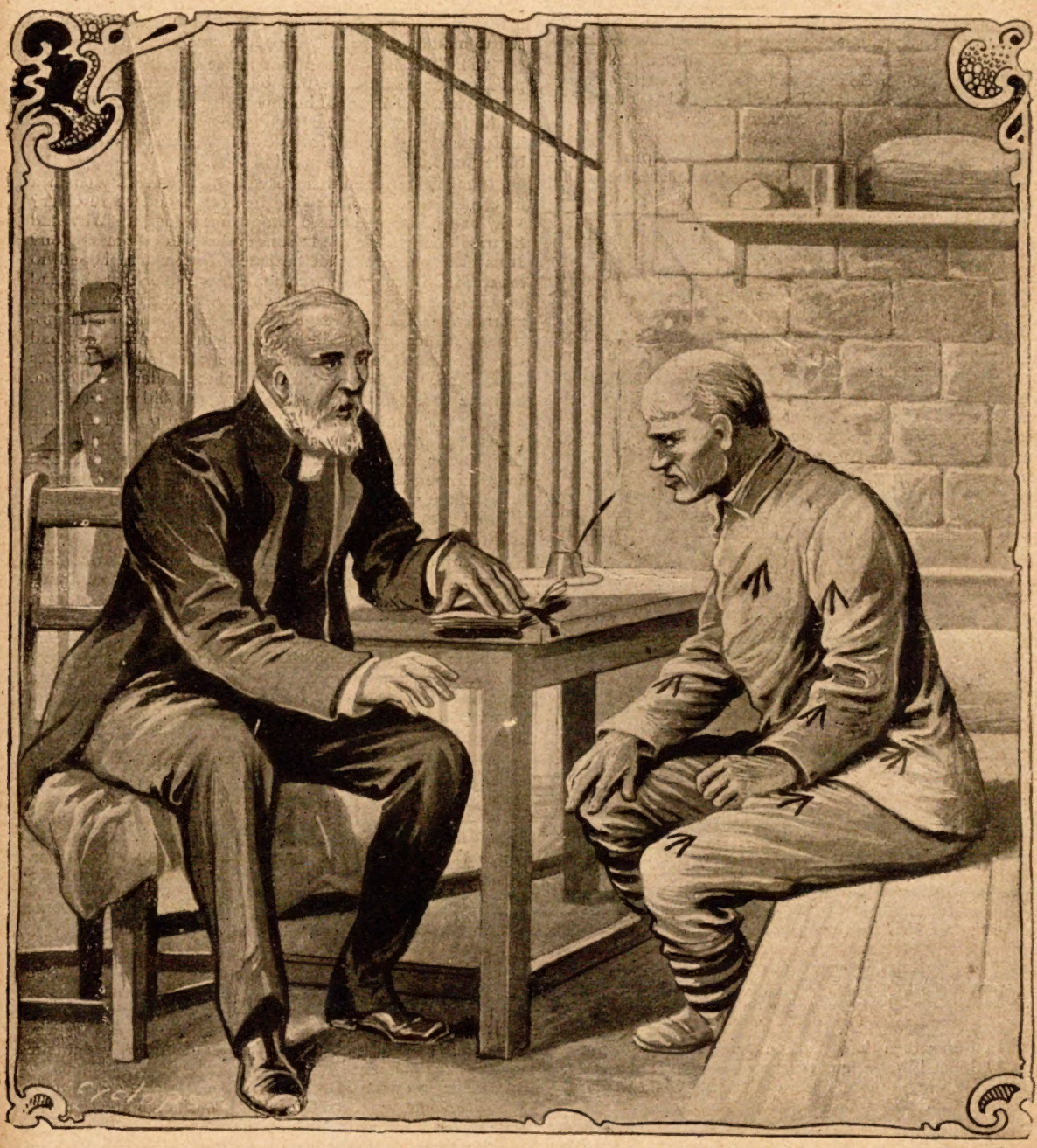
POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

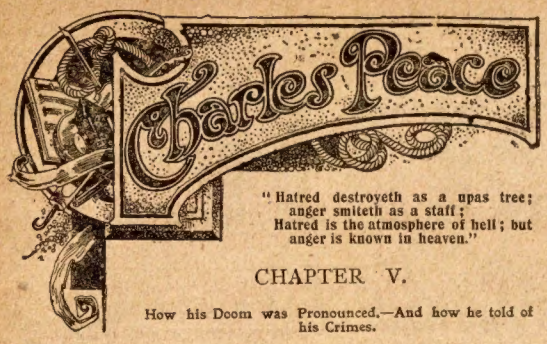
PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY



CHARLES PEACE IN THE CONDEMNED CELL.

Vol. 1.—No. 5.



"Hatred destroyeth as a upas tree; anger smiteth as a staff; Hatred is the atmosphere of hell; but anger is known in heaven."

CHAPTER V.

How his Doom was Pronounced.—And how he told of his Crimes.

"NOT guilty!" pleaded the small brown figure in the dock, and therefore a jury had to be empannelled to try the case. For the Crown appeared Mr. Campbell Foster, Q.C., and Mr. Hugh Shield, while the prisoner was represented by Mr. Frank Lockwood and the Hon. Stuart Wortley, instructed by Messrs. Clegg and Sons.

In rising to open the case for the prosecution, Mr. Campbell Foster said that, in the first place, he would lay before the jury a plan of the premises at Banner-Cross. This he did, giving a description of the buildings, just as we have done in an earlier chapter. He then asked the jurymen to cast from their minds anything that they might have read in the papers, so as to be able to arrive at a fair verdict from the mass of evidence which he was about to put before them.

Continuing, he said that the man into whose death they were about to inquire had previously lived at a place called Darnall, but, in consequence of the persecution to which they were subjected by the prisoner, he and his wife had moved to another suburb of Sheffield, known as Banner-Cross. While at Darnall the prisoner had lived in the next house but one to Mr. Dyson. He then gave the history of the growing intimacy between Mrs. Dyson and the prisoner, and recounted in detail the passages-at-arms which the two had had, and mentioned the issue of the warrant against Peace as evidence of "bad blood" existing between the prisoner and Dyson.

The first time that the convict was at Banner-Cross was the day on which the Dysons moved into their new home. On that day Peace went into the shop kept by the Dysons' next-door neighbours—the Gregorys—and purchased some tobacco. He had a lengthy conversation with the shopkeeper. On the night of the murder he was also seen at Banner-Cross by several people, all of whom were able to pick him out of a number of persons. This was sufficient proof that he was in the suburb when the murder took place.

At twenty minutes to eight on the evening of the tragedy he spoke to a man named Brassington, asking him whether it was true that certain strangers had come to live among them. When Brassington replied that he did not know anything about the new-comers, Peace began to speak of them in a disrespectful manner—so much so that the witness wondered why his unknown companion was so anxious to disparage them. Not satisfied with this, Peace handed to Brassington a roll of papers, which he asked him to read by the light of the street lamp, adding that they would show him what sort of people the Dysons were. Brassington returned the papers to the prisoner, remarking that he did not want to know anything about them, but before he did so he noticed that there were one or two photos in the package.

Mr. Foster then described the murder, as we have done, and mentioned that a man named Wilson saw the prisoner climbing over the fence. Later a search was made by the constable in the direction in which he supposed the murderer had gone, with the result that certain papers were found, among them being a card on which was the order: "Charles Peace is requested not to interfere with my family." The card also bore the address and name of the murdered man. "Now, gentlemen," continued the counsel, "can there be any reasonable doubt that the man who dropped those papers was the man who had just slain the engineer, and was fleeing from justice?"

Following this, Mr. Foster detailed the circumstances of Peace's capture, with which our readers are fully conversant, and said that Mrs. Dyson had been brought over from America to identify the prisoner. After identification, Peace had made a daring attempt at escape, but he would not refer further to that matter, for it was well known to the public.

At this point Mr. Lockwood intervened, saying that it was not a proper remark for the counsel to make, but that it could not affect the case in the least, inasmuch as it was a matter of common knowledge; still, he protested against *ex parte* matter being introduced. To this the judge agreed, and told the counsel for the Crown to confine himself to matters directly affecting the case under trial.

Then Mr. Foster said that Peace's revolver would be produced, as well as the bullet removed from the brain of Mr. Dyson, and it would be found that the bore and rifling of the former corresponded with the grooves on the missile. This, he thought, was fairly conclusive evidence that the bullet was fired from the pistol in question.

It might be urged that Peace had shot Mr. Dyson in a fit of passion. If so, why did he carry a loaded revolver? Why had he dogged his footsteps for so long? Why had he tried to disparage the Dysons in the eyes of Brassington? It is clearly proved that he hated Dyson, and hoped to make Mrs. Dyson his paramour. More than that, he had told Brassington that he would shoot the Dysons before morning. This, he thought, was a clear proof of the prisoner's malice, and if the jury thought the same they had only one course open to them—namely, to find that Charles Peace did, with malice aforethought, murder Mr. Dyson, and the consequence of such a verdict would be death.

The first witness was an architect, who proved that the plans of the Banner-Cross buildings were correct, and then Mrs. Dyson was called. Considerable interest was shown in this witness, for not only was she the wife of the murdered man, but it was strongly suspected that she had been entangled into a liaison with Peace some time prior to the flight from Darnall.

After telling the story of the persecution at Darnall and the change to Banner-Cross as we now know it, Mrs. Dyson turned to the night of the murder. She gave a graphic description of the events which are already in the possession of our readers, and then was cross-examined at considerable length. She was absolutely positive that her husband never laid a hand on Peace. He was never within touching distance of him. After the first shot was fired the prisoner retreated rapidly, and was followed by Mr. Dyson, but before the latter could catch him up Peace fired a second time, and Mr. Dyson fell to the ground.

Mr. Lockwood tried to make the widow admit that she had been intimate with Peace, but she would have none of it. She said that the picture-framer had pestered the life out of her, and had done his best to disturb the harmony of her family, but she had never looked on him with favour, though she was so afraid of him that she would do what he told her to. Certain letters which were shown her she recognised as her own, but others which were said to be hers she repudiated. A question was then asked as to whether, one day when Mrs. Dyson was in the Stag public-house, the prisoner did not come and sit beside her. She declared that he did not do so, unless he was disguised. This subsequently turned out to be the case. On one occasion she had received a letter from Peace when she was giving some refreshment to some children in a restaurant, but she sent it back unopened.

That closed Mrs. Dyson's evidence, and the next witness was the neighbour, Mrs. Gregory. All she could add to the tale was that she had detected the footsteps of Mrs. Dyson on the eventful evening, and had heard her scream. Then two pistol-shots rang out, and she shut herself into her house.

Later she saw Mr. Dyson, propped up in a chair and bleeding from a wound in the temple.

Sarah Colgraves was next put into the box, and she threw fresh light on the affair. It appears from her evidence that, on the evening of the murder, the prisoner came to her and asked her if she would take a message to Mrs. Dyson for him. She said that she did not know the woman, when Peace said that "she was his paramour," only he used a much coarser expression. Mrs. Colgraves told him to be careful what he said about people to strangers, and bade him take his own messages.

She was followed by Brassington, who recounted Peace's conversation to him on the evening of the murder. Mr. Lockwood severely cross-examined him, but he was perfectly sure of the date, which corresponded with the day of the crime.

Then came Wyville, or Wilson, who had seen the culprit scale the wall, and he repeated the evidence which he had previously given to the police. He said that he had seen the deceased lying on the ground after he had given notice to the police of the flight of the murderer. Mrs. Dyson was supporting his head, and he added that he had then assisted in carrying the wounded man into the house, where he subsequently expired.

After the formal evidence of the surgeons who were called to perform the post-mortem examination on the unfortunate engineer, the constable Ward was called, and he gave an account of his search through the fields after the prisoner. The packet of letters produced was found by him, and he had given it at once to his superiors.

The bullet taken from the murdered man's brain was produced by Inspector Bradbury, and he said that it was given over to him by the Chief Constable of Sheffield.

Then Mr. Foster wished to prove animus on the part of the prisoner, but Mr. Lockwood objected. However, the judge decided that it was admissible evidence, and various persons were called to show that Charles Peace had annoyed the Dysons during their sojourn at Darnall.

These were followed by the officer, Robinson, and his associates, who had first effected the capture of the burglar Peace, and a gunsmith swore that the revolver taken from the convict was the same as had discharged the bullet which the inspector had produced.

Mr. Foster then summed up for the prosecution, and the defence was called.

It was a hopeless task that Mr. Frank Lockwood, one of the most genial of all English advocates, had taken in hand, but he made the best of it. He declared that there was a "wild and merciless cry for blood" repugnant to every one of the better feelings of Englishmen. His client had been tried by the Press and found guilty before the law of the land had had the slightest chance of saying whether he was really the criminal or the victim of coincidences. He thought that the evidence of Mrs. Dyson was not trustworthy because she could not accurately remember certain dates. Further, he maintained that there was distinct evi-

PEACE RECEIVING HIS DEATH SENTENCE FROM JUSTICE LOPES.

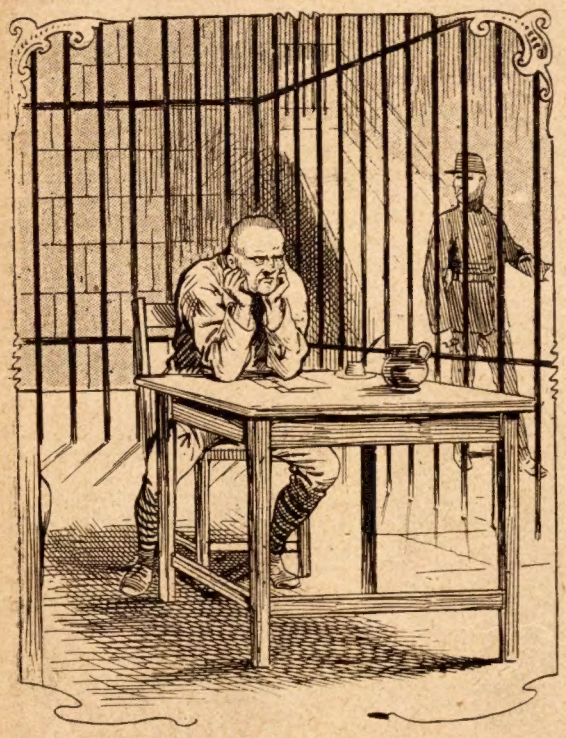
dence of a struggle, during which, he said, the pistol had exploded accidentally. That Peace fired the first shot he did not deny, but he contended that it was only done to scare Mr. Dyson, but the second shot was purely accidental, and therefore could not be held as the ground for a prosecution for murder.

The only basis for connecting Peace with this crime was the evidence of Mrs. Dyson, and he declared that she was in every way unreliable, inasmuch as she was unable to remember material facts. Therefore he begged the jury to do justice to the prisoner, his client, and discharge him.

Mr. Justice Lopes listened to this harangue with patience, but it was clear to all that he was not inclined to believe the single word of the barrister, unsupported by any witnesses whatsoever. At the magisterial inquiry it will be remembered that Peace made a lot of the number of witnesses which he wanted to call, but when it came to the trial he had no one to speak a good word for him. Then the judge summed up the case for the jury.

He said that if there was the least evidence to show that there had been a struggle and that the pistol had exploded accidentally, then no verdict of murder could be brought in,

but the argument put forward by the defence was nothing but a theory, and there was not a particle of evidence to support it. The jury ought to carefully weigh the evidence of Mrs. Dyson, inasmuch as it was the most important in the



Thought over the whole of his life.

case, and when they had done so, and had determined how much credence should be given to it, they would probably be in a position to give a verdict.

That Peace had a revolver with him on the night in question there was no doubt, and that the bullet found in the murdered man's brain was fired from that revolver there could also be no doubt, but the question which was before them was whether Peace fired the shot deliberately at Dyson, and whether he had gone to the house with an intention of committing some crime. Why did he carry a pistol? The case for the prosecution did not rest alone on Mrs. Dyson's evidence, while that for the defence was entirely uncorroborated. With these remarks he dismissed the jury to their duties.

The twelve men retired to consider their verdict at a quarter past seven in the evening, and the prisoner was removed to the cells below the court. His hopes of escape had been raised by the brilliant address of his counsel, but all the same, fears would flit through his brain. If guilty, death; if innocent, perpetual servitude. But life is sweet to all, and he hoped—he almost dared to pray—that the jury would be sufficiently affected by Mr. Lockwood's speech to acquit him of the murder which he knew he had committed and which he had carefully planned.

He sat down to rest, for he felt certain that the men who held his life in their hands would not be hasty in giving a verdict, but ere he had fairly settled himself he was summoned to appear at the bar again to learn his fate.

Pale, and with wistful eyes, he entered the dock and faced the tribunal which was to mete out to him life or death. In such a short time, surely, they could not have found him guilty! He clung to this last straw as a drowning man does to any fragment of wreckage; but his hope was short-lived.

One by one the names of the jurors were called over, and each answered to his; then the Clerk of Arraigns addressed them:

"Gentlemen of the Jury, are you agreed upon your verdict?"

"We are."

"Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty."

To the prisoner the clerk next turned, and saw a shrinking, cowering figure, which recognised that at last his "crime had found him out."

"You have been indicted and convicted of wilful murder. Have you anything to say why judgment to die should not be passed on you according to law?"

Very faintly, Peace replied: "It's no use my saying anything." He remembered the same question being put to poor young Habron, and he knew that nothing can be urged when once the fiat has gone forth from the mouths of his fellows. Then the ushers called for silence while the judge pronounced the extreme sentence of the law.

Assuming the black cap, Mr. Justice Lopes said:

"Charles Peace, after a most careful trial, and after every argument has been urged by your learned counsel which ingenuity can suggest, you have been found guilty of the murder of Arthur Dyson by a jury of your country. It is not my duty, still less is it my desire, to aggravate your feelings at this moment by a recapitulation of any portion of the details of what, I fear, I can only call your criminal career. Imploring you, during the short time that may remain to you to live, to prepare for eternity, I pass upon you that sentence, and the only sentence, which the law permits in cases of this kind. The sentence is that you be taken from this place to the place from whence you came and thence to a place of execution, and that you be there hanged by the neck until you are dead, and that your body be buried within the precincts of the prison in which you

Learnt the trade of a carver and gilder.

shall have last been confined after your conviction. And may the Lord have mercy on your soul!"

Peace staggered when he heard the terrible doom to which he was sentenced, but he soon recovered himself, and turned before he left the dock to thank his solicitors for the

great efforts they had made on his behalf. Then he was removed and taken to the cells of the condemned to await the dreadful morning when the living man should be suddenly slain by the swift arm of the law.

The arrangements of the quarters for the doomed in Armley Gaol were different in the middle of the last century from those which now obtain. The place in which Peace was put was really a cell within a cell, or rather, a species of iron cage in a larger apartment. Two sides of his new room were formed by the solid masonry of the prison, and the other two were constructed out of iron bars of sufficient thickness to prevent the strongest murderer escaping. The warders and any friends who came to visit the condemned criminal were admitted into the outer compartment, but only the warders on duty were allowed to pass the iron gate which separated Peace from the world until the day when the executioner should enter to pinion his victim.

PLAYING THE VIOLIN AT PUBLIC HOUSES

It was while Peace was thus caged that he made the confessions which have astonished the world. His statements might be discounted but for the fact that his paramour, Mrs. Thompson, gave an entirely independent account which corroborated the narrative of the condemned man. With this we will now have to deal, for though the events therein detailed took place long before Peace's trial, yet they show up the criminal in his true colours, and will serve to point a moral out of the life of this consummate rascal.

Seated in the condemned cell, Peace thought over the whole of his eventful life. He saw then where he had gone wrong, where the inability to say "no" had involved him in crime. He was bitterly repentant and anxious to save himself by the fulness of his confession from the awful death which awaited him. But inasmuch as he had been "shifty" through his life, he was "shifty" when the grim shadow of the gallows hung over him.

Knowing that the chaplain was the only friend he had on earth who was possessed of any influence, he set himself to work to impress him with the sincerity of his repentance, trusting that that official, who has lately passed away, would make representations in the proper quarters. He did not tell him all at once, but doled out the tale of his misdeeds one by one, and carefully watched the effect of each disclosure. But though there is much hypocrisy and lying in the story which Peace gave of his life, the following may be taken as fairly accurate, inasmuch as it is corroborated by three distinct persons.

Peace was the son of a keeper at one of the travelling manageries. Throughout his early life he was accustomed to roam all over the country, and the training which he received cannot but have been harmful to a boy of his disposition. Long before the lad was fourteen years old his father died from the effects of an accident, and Peace was left to fend for himself.

Released from parental control, Peace took to a criminal career, and, with an astuteness which is not usually found in boys, recognised the fact that the downfall of most criminals is due to the falseness of associates. Accordingly, he determined to work alone.

He was essentially immoral, and lust held him as an easy prey. Thus it was that he risked everything for women—generally very ugly ones.

At the outset of his career he preferred to pick pockets to any other form of crime, but he soon drifted into burglary. All the same, he stole watches and chains before he turned his attention to anything else. His first burglary provided him with a gold watch and chain. It was only when he found how easily goods were stolen while people were sleeping that he determined to give up pocket-picking and take to regular house-breaking.

At about eighteen years of age he learnt the trade of a carver and gilder, and was very proud of his prowess. His tastes were naturally artistic, and he turned out really excellent work. All the time that he was working at his business he was pilfering by night, and the several neighbourhoods into which he went had good cause to deplore his presence.

For a long time Bradford was his operative centre, as he found that it was a convenient place to get about from.

It was while he was there that he found out a method of altering cheques and notes to make them represent any sum he felt inclined, and of this discovery he made great use. Then he fell into the clutches of the law. He was caught robbing the house of a Mrs. Ward in October, 1851, and for this was sentenced to a month's imprisonment. Coming out of gaol, he maintained himself by playing the violin at public-houses and private parties till the year 1854, when he again was caught and sent to penal servitude for four years.

On his release from prison he married Hannah Ward—or rather he said that he did—and, though constantly pillaging, managed to keep out of the hands of the police till 1859, in which year he was again sent to penal servitude for burglary. This sentence was for five years, but his good conduct obtained for him a certain remission, and he was liberated in June, 1864, only to continue his depredations.

For two years he again managed to keep out of the clutches of the law, but in 1866 he was captured and sent into durance vile until August, 1872. After this he was

Preyed on the houses in the neighbourhood.

more careful, and evaded the constables whose duty lay in looking after property, so that he had established a respectable character before he moved to Darnall, in 1875.

It was during one of his many raids on other people's property that he received a shot in the hand which destroyed two of his fingers. He was treated at a public infirmary under the name of Parker.

After the warrant was issued for his arrest at Darnall he vanished, and, retiring to Hull, started a provision-shop there. At this he did fairly well until November 14, 1876, when he left Hull very suddenly, and was not heard of again for a considerable time.

He went to Whalley Range, and what he did there will be told later.

On November 29 he shot Mr. Dyson—as he declared in his confession—in self-defence, and then fled from Sheffield to London.

Here it was that his damaged hand came into use. He pretended during the daytime that he was maimed, and used to wear a false arm, which strapped over his own limb. To the arm was fastened a hook, and those who met him pitied him for his misfortune. In reality, however, he was perfectly capable of using his own arm, and only adopted the false one as "a blind."

Peace admitted that while he was at Greenwich and Peckham he had preyed upon the houses in the neighbourhood, and he told the chaplain that he had been carefully disguised, but he had only told one-half of his life.

The Rev. Mr. Littlewood was most solicitous in coaxing the wretched convict to confess all that he had on his conscience before the day of death arrived, but Peace was like a miser, and only parted with one fact when he saw that no further credit was to be obtained from the disclosure of the former transgressions. Thus step by step the history of Charles Peace was unfolded by the criminal to Mr. Littlewood, and still no reprieve came.

Must he confess all? If he did it would make not the least difference in his fate, should the Home Secretary be determined to seek his blood, but, on the other hand, if he made some sort of reparation to the State, mercy might be shown him—the mercy which he was most desirous of obtaining. Day by day went past, and the hour when he would have to expiate his crimes on the gallows came nearer and nearer. Charles Peace was still undetermined. But at last he saw that whatever he might say could not make his fate more certain, but a revelation might cause a delay, so he confessed to Mr. Littlewood that he was the actual murderer of Constable Cock, for whose murder he had heard William Habron sentenced to death at the Manchester Assizes by Mr. Justice Lopes just before he had murdered Mr. Dyson.

The chaplain was horror-struck, for he could not believe that any man would sit in court and hear a fellow-creature condemned to death for a murder which he had never committed. Still, he felt that it was his duty to communicate the fact to the Home Secretary without further delay. He did so, and the representative of the Crown gave orders that the matter should be fully investigated, but at the same time declined to interfere in the sentence which had been passed on Charles Peace, much to the latter's disappointment.

The papers throughout the country predicted that Charles Peace would confess to many other crimes before he was executed, but they were mistaken. The "Habron murder" he admitted was the work of his own hand, but he denied that anybody else had suffered for his misdeeds. Fortunately, the Home Secretary had reprieved the Habron who was condemned to death, and it was the work of a few days for the Government to liberate the innocent convict and compensate him with £800 for his lost liberty and for the terrible anxiety of mind through which he had passed. Thus at the last Peace did an act of justice.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.

THE father of a Lord Hardwicke was hanged for forgery. When Lord H. sat as Chancellor, an old countryman was examined as to a particular fact, the exact date of which he could not recollect. "All that I remember about it," said he, "is that it happened on the day old Yorke was hanged."

ON the Scotch circuits the judges gave dinners, having an allowance for that purpose. The great Lord Kames was extremely parsimonious, and, at a circuit dinner at Perth, did not allow claret, as had been the custom. The conversation turned on Sir Charles Hardy's fleet, which was then blockaded by the French, and one of the company asked what had become of our fleet. The answer came, "Confined, like us, to port."

ONE of the Dover stage-coaches, on its way to London, was stopped by a single highwayman, who was informed by the coachman there were no inside passengers and only one in the basket, and he was a sailor. The robber then proceeded to exercise his employment on the tar. When waking him out of his sleep, Jack demanded what he wanted, to which the son of plunder replied, "Your money!" "You shan't have it!" said Jack. "No?" replied the other; "then I'll blow your brains out!" "Blow away, then, you land-lubber!" cried Jack, squirting the tobacco-juice out of his mouth. "I may as well go to London without brains as without money. Drive on, coachman!"

Walled Up Alive.

THE TERRIBLE DEATH METED OUT TO PERSIAN TRAITORS.

FROM time to time one reads in fanatical journals accounts of skeletons being found in the crumbling walls of edifices which once were monasteries or convents, and the supporters of these papers rave about the sanctuaries which should have been the abode of love and the cloister for prayer being turned into charnel houses by the ancient religious who used to inhabit the dwellings. However much it may be pointed out that the early monks and nuns in this island were in the habit of burying those of their community who died in the odour of sanctity in the walls of their home, so that they might be protected from the wiles of the devil by the hallowed remains which surrounded them, one can never manage to convince these people that the mass of archæologists is right, and that only their own blind prejudice is wrong. "The bodies were found walled up, therefore they must have been walled up when alive," is the unfailing, but illogical, answer.

Still, though we may recoil at the very idea of walling up a fellow creature alive, it is not so very long ago that that form of punishment was common enough in the land of the Shah.

If you walk round the confines of Shiraz, you will see here and there little stone pillars, and a closer examination will reveal the fact that these are in reality tubes filled with cement. Ask a native of Persia what they are, and, with a significant smile, he will remark, "Gatch." They are, indeed, the tombs of those who have met their death, alive, in their own tomb.

It is not so many years since the last "gatching" took place, and the writer was present at it. The punishment was devised to put an end to the bands of marauders, bandits and foot-pads, which infested the principal roads of the land of the Lion and the Sun, and it was in the hopes that the sight of the ghastly pillars might remind those inclined to pillage of the dreadful fate which awaited them that the awful institution was sanctioned. Since those days it has been used as a punishment for treason and for murderers of the more brutal type.

Early in the morning the culprit was visited by the mullahs of his church, and then given a cup of coffee. Some little distance outside the village or town where the murderer was confined a small pillar of brickwork was erected, about four feet in height. Around this gathered an expectant throng of friends, relations, and sympathisers with the unhappy malefactor, for in the East it is usually only those who have a direct interest in the culprit who attend his departure from this world.

In chains, and carefully guarded, with perhaps a few score of the riff-raff of the town following, the convict is brought out to the open plain where stands the pillar. The rays of the morning sun have hardly illumined the landscape, the air is cool, and everyone feels that the best time of the glaring Eastern day is present. Not so the unhappy criminal; he knows that the earlier his execution takes place the more torture he has to suffer before unconsciousness supervenes and mercifully relieves him of his agony.

Arrived at the scene of the execution, the murderer or bandit is permitted to say farewell to his friends and relations, but strict precautions are taken that no weapon is passed to him. Then his feet are bound, and he is lifted into the pillar, which reaches a little above his waist.

His hands are next bound, and he is given a draught containing a very small quantity of opium. All this time he is allowed to retain his sheepskin hat or fez. Rapidly the bricklayers build up the remainder of the pillar till the top of it is about an inch and a half beneath the doomed man's chin.

Buckets containing "chunam," a species of plaster of Paris, are next brought, and their contents are poured into the pillar so as to encompass the evil-doer on every side. From time to time a little water is added to the cement, so that the man may be properly surrounded. Thus the process goes on till the cement is level with the top of the pillar, and the criminal encased up to his neck in his future tomb. By this time the sun has risen, and the fearful heat of the Persian day is beginning to be felt. Then it is that the executioners remove the culprit's cap and leave him, under a guard, to die by inches. Subject to the consent of the soldiers who are on duty, the relations may offer their comrade drink, provided that the same contains no poison. In their kindness they do so, but the temporary relief thus afforded only increases his sufferings a hundred-fold.

Occasionally a pipe of tobacco may be offered to him, and in the hopes that it will ease his pain he accepts it, but in that pipe no opium may be put.

The sun beats down upon his uncovered head, the bricks of his narrow prison become heated, and slowly, slowly, slowly he feels the mortar setting, and knows that each succeeding instant will increase his torment and bring him nearer to death.

Thus the weary day passes. Under ordinary circumstances, the mortar has set before nightfall, though occasionally the sufferer may linger for twenty-four hours ere merciful death terminates his misery. At last he gasps, his eyes roll, a few sighs, a groan, and the spirit has fled. Then the mourners return sorrowfully to the city, driven in by the soldiers who have seen the execution carried out.

Next morn there is but a pillar standing on the plain. What has become of the head which so lately surmounted it? Ask the prowling jackals, ask the vultures and kites that hover over the scene of death. A couple of bucketfuls of cement thrown on the top and the pillar is complete, ready to stand as a warning to malefactors for ages.

Barbarous do you call it? We were just as brutal in Merry England some two hundred years ago.

Even-Handed Justice.

A GOOD anecdote is told of the eminent Irish lawyer, J. Philpot Curran. A farmer was in the habit of attending the monthly market at Belfast, and disposing of his cattle and farm produce there. He lived some ten miles from the city, and on market day always went to one public-house for his dinner and whatever liquid refreshments he required during the day. On one occasion he had disposed of his cattle, etc., and meeting some friends, had stayed later than was his wont, and having a large sum of money in his possession, felt disinclined to travel the lonely road home by himself with the money in his pocket, as at that time highway robbery was of common occurrence. He accordingly called the landlord on one side, and explaining matters to him, requested him to take charge of £100 for him, promising to call for it the next day. The landlord willingly consented, and the farmer handed him over a bag containing one hundred sovereigns, which the host carefully counted and put away in his safe. The farmer went home, and duly returned the following day. He had a drink or two, and then called the publican aside and said, "I'll take that £100 now, please." "You'll take what?" replied the landlord. "Why, the £100 I left with you last night." "You must be mistaken," replied the other; "you certainly left no money with me." And, say what he might, the farmer was unable to get any satisfaction from the rascally landlord. He accordingly sought the advice of Lawyer Curran, and having stated his case, was asked if he could raise another hundred pounds. "Yes," said the farmer, "I can." "Well, then," said Curran, "take £100 in a bag with you to-morrow. Go and see the landlord, and tell him, privately, that you must have been half-drunk on market day, and forgot where you really did leave the £100. Then, at night, rather late, go again to the same man, and ask him if you can leave the £100 with him till the next day, and be careful to have a friend with you as a witness. When you have done this, come and see me again." The farmer did as instructed, and on calling on Curran the following day, said, "Well, he's got £200 of mine now, and I'm as far off getting it back as ever I was. What must I do now, sir?" "Go back to him, by yourself," advised the lawyer, "ask him for the £100, and if he gives it you, come back to me." Away went the farmer, and in a few hours he returned with the money. "It's all right, Mr. Curran," said he, "I've got the hundred, but he's still got my first hundred." "Easy, my boy," retorted the lawyer; "you'll get your other hundred very quickly. Take your friend, the witness, with you, and tell the landlord that you want the £100 that he saw you leave in his charge." The farmer did as he was told, the landlord saw that he had been caught in his own trap, and handed over to the farmer, with the best grace possible, the £100 which really belonged to him.

Remarkable Diamond Robbery.

"In white and innocency blest,
The plainest beauties were the best."
—WARTON, "Sappho's Advice."

THERE have been numerous instances of smart business in the way of acquiring valuable property, by inducing tradesmen, under various specious representations, to convey their wares to some residence or hotel, bearing a high-sounding designation. Of such was the case of the notorious Tarpeys, who succeeded in a nefarious design, which was neatly planned, and was carried out with consummate energy.

Messrs. London and Ryder were a respectable and somewhat confiding firm of West-End jewellers, whose business was under the superintendence of James Unett Parkes, who had been in the employ of the firm for five years. On January 12, 1871, a man, who gave the name of Tyrrell, entered Mr. Ryder's shop, and saw one of the assistants, who showed him some jewellery. He selected several articles, and, stating that he wished to make a present to his wife, requested that an assortment of articles might be sent to his house—No. 4, Upper Berkeley Street, in order that the lady might choose for herself.

About half-past five in the afternoon Mr. Parkes went to the address he had given with a quantity of diamond ornaments, which he carried in a small bag, and which were worth altogether between £5,000 and £6,000. The front door was opened by Tyrrell, who made some excuse for the absence of his servant. Parkes was invited to go upstairs, and he was conducted into the drawing-room. Martha Tarpey, a young married woman, was sitting by the fire. Parkes opened his bag, and took out the five cases of diamond ornaments which Tyrrell had seen in the shop, leaving the rest of the jewellery in the bag, which he (Parkes) placed at his feet beneath the table.

Tarpey and the so-called Tyrrell expressed their admiration as they examined the various articles, of which they were informed the prices. At last Tyrrell said he should like his wife to have a necklace, valued at £1,100, or a smaller necklace, valued at £550, with a diamond pendant worth £185, and either one or two rings, valued respectively at £385 and £160, and remarked to the woman (Tarpey) that he thought her sister had better see them previously to their decision being made. He then requested the sister to be called, and Tarpey soon returned, saying that her sister would join them in a few minutes.

Martha Tarpey then, with some agility, went behind Parkes, and placed a handkerchief, saturated with a potent spirit, over his nose and face. As she did so, the man rushed at him and clasped him round the arms, while the woman continued to hold the handkerchief to his face. The victim of the plot succeeded in disengaging himself for a minute, and got the handkerchief away. The man seized him by the throat, and there was another administration of the handkerchief, which produced, as the narrator said, a stifling sensation. The male assailant still maintained his hold, despite a severe struggle, and in the end Parkes was completely overpowered and forced down on a sofa.

During all this time the woman was not called by any name. The man became unconscious, and when he recovered his senses, he found his arms strapped across his chest, another strap around his wrists, fastening his hands together, and a third strap round his legs. Tyrrell was standing over him, and threatened that if he moved he would murder him.

The injured man pleaded that the strap across his chest should be loosened, as the pain was very great, and this was done to some extent. The captive then struggled to get himself into a sitting posture to look at the table, which was behind him, in order to see what was being done with the jewellery.

Tyrrell forced him down, and tied a handkerchief over his eyes. He said that if he were quiet someone would be sent to him in ten minutes. Tyrrell then retired, but before leaving the room, he exclaimed: "Quick, Lucy, quick! Bring my hat!"

The street door slammed, and the imprisoned man directly made an effort to rise; and when he had, with his teeth, unfastened the strap round his hands, he removed the other straps, and with a poker broke a window and called for assistance. In a few minutes someone came. The jewellery, which had been placed on the table, had disappeared, with the exception of a small gold chain. The leathern cases had been left; and the jewellery which had not been taken from the bag remained intact.

The foregoing will familiarise the reader with the essential features of the case, and it will be of interest, at this stage, to investigate some of the antecedents of these adventurers. The facts at our disposal will not take us farther back than a few days prior to the scene which we have just described.

Tyrrell was described as a man of gentlemanly manners and good appearance, and well dressed. He engaged the house in Berkeley Street, a day or two before the robbery, giving as a reference the name of an hotel-keeper at Bath, and a satisfactory letter having been received in reply, possession was given to him on the 10th of January, at a rental of six guineas a week. Two days after this the negotiations were made with the jewellery firm.

The activities of Tyrrell between the 9th of January and the 12th of the same month were extraordinary, and his exploitations denoted the work of an accomplished tactician and a resolute adventurer. Harking back to the first of the before-mentioned days, we find that Tyrrell, who—as the reader has probably guessed—was no other than Tarpey, left Windsor Villa, Champion Terrace, Leamington—where he and his wife had resided since the preceding June—to proceed to London. In the course of conversation, Mrs. Tarpey—she and her husband were known in that name at Leamington—informed her landlady she would want to go away for a day, and she wondered if a nurse could be procured to take charge of her child.

On the 11th of January, the landlady received two telegrams for Mrs. Tarpey, who handed over a letter, addressed to a house in Oxford Street (London), which she desired her to post for her. In the evening the landlady was asked to order a cab for her lodger to take her to the station the next morning. On the evening of the 12th, a telegram was received from Tarpey, and about two o'clock the next morning they, husband and wife, returned.

On the following morning the landlady noticed several changes in the appearance of her lodgers. Mrs. Tarpey had a strange mark under one of her eyes, Tarpey had shaved off his beard, and left but a little "imperial." Mrs. Tarpey asked the strange question whether the landlady thought it had made her husband look younger, and whether he was not like a Frenchman.

It appears that, during the course of the day, several circumstances aroused Miss Pitt's (the landlady), suspicions, and proceeding into their dressing-room, and seeing a bunch of keys in the drawer of a table, she unlocked it, and, like any other curious human (spelt w-o-m-a-n) she looked in. There were two small phials marked "drugs" and a little box of dye, with a brush, and a new razor and a pocket-handkerchief. The handkerchief was near to the phials.

Two hours afterwards, Miss Pitt again looked in the drawer, and then found it was empty. Mr. Tarpey, as she said, was in and out of the dressing-room many times during the day. Miss Pitt never relaxed her vigilance, and she noticed that each time the suspect left he locked the door after him. On the Sunday a foreign "Bradshaw" was brought for him, and on the day following he suddenly left, unperceived, and apparently without the formal adieu. Miss Pitt was evidently on the "giving away" tack, for, after partaking of tea with Mrs. Tarpey on the Wednesday succeeding the day of Tarpey's departure, she communicated with Superintendent Lund, of the Leamington police, certain facts which led to her lodger's apprehension.

We are now brought to the straight line of history, in its relation to the case, and, to skip over the details respecting the preliminary magisterial investigation, we shall take up the thread of the story at the Central Criminal Court, where, in March, 1871, Martha Tarpey was arraigned on the charge involved in this remarkable crime.

She appeared in the dock carrying a baby, and the famous Montagu Williams held the brief for the defence, and trenchantly urged that the prisoner was not responsible for her conduct, having been under the influence and control of her husband.

A proportion of the time of the court was expended in argument upon this feature of the case, but ultimately the Recorder ruled that the evidence went to show that she was not acting under the coercion of her husband, and, consequently, the case must be dealt with by the jury, who ultimately returned a verdict of "Not Guilty."

It would have been hard to devise anything more effective than that which presented itself to the jury naturally whenever they turned to the dock. The pretty blue-eyed babe, in its frills, ribbons, and long robes of spotless white, behaving, as a stout lady remarked, "as good as gold"; the ladylike young mother ministering to it as tenderly and unaffectedly as if she were in her nursery at home, and without a care; even the occasional offers of assistance from the female warder, who sat behind, and who seemed to merge the official in the woman whenever she spoke to her charge—mother's pride in her first darling—the things seemed to be so incongruous as to be incompatible, and some shrewd observers shook their heads knowingly when the baby was transferred and its mother's face was seen.

Mr. Montagu Williams, in his successful endeavours to exonerate the wife, abused the husband in round terms, and at each of his accusations the prisoner had shaken her head in indignant denial. When the verdict was given, Mrs. Tarpey looked even sadder than before, and the applause which came from the people in the body of the court appeared to frighten her. Then came a temporary delay, while the Recorder consulted with Baron Bramwell, and then a ladylike little figure is observed to nimbly follow a woman and baby down the steps at the back of the dock, and that is the last seen of the acquitted Mrs. Tarpey.

But what of Mr. Tarpey?

PARKES WAS COMPLETELY OVERPOWERED.

all made a touching commentary on Mr. Montagu Williams's eloquent denunciations and appeals.

The jury were of the comfortable family-man type, middle-aged, respectable men of business, with the tender side to their natures coming uppermost whenever the little ones at home are thought of. The notion of an unfortunate woman having to face a court full of men under such circumstances as environed the unhappy Mrs. Tarpey, and the manifest evidences of her affection for her infant and for her absent, wily husband, were the very things to touch their hearts; and when its refreshment was concluded and the tiny thing was handed with infinite care to the gaoleress, who took it to her arms while Mrs. Tarpey turned to face her judges, there was not a man among them who did not seem to think more of his own Mrs. Blank and the interesting circumstances attending her little cherubs, than of Messrs. London and Ryder's jewels or the punishment to be awarded to the thief.

Robbery with violence, and an infant at the breast; deep and nefarious plotting, and the honest, trusting eyes of babyhood; the administration of a noxious drug, and a fair young

Instinctively, the myrmidons of the law kept an unflinching eye on the movements of the lady who had just experienced a hair-breadth escape, under somewhat exceptional circumstances, appealing, we imagine, more to sentiment than real merit. And, as she wended her way to Marylebone Road a day or two after the events recorded, the detectives who followed her movements were evidently much impressed by her pulling up at a certain house in that thoroughfare.

What attracted her there was a mystery. What attracted the detectives was not. In the course of the proceedings nothing had transpired which could give the least clue to the magnetism which drew the fair lady to the spot; but it was a natural deduction that this movement had something to do with the fugitive, Michael Tarpey, as his full name appears to have been.

After the trial Mrs. Tarpey resorted to the expedient of dyeing her hair black, and she assumed a dress of mourning. This arrangement must have its meaning. And again, an additional link was added to the chain of circumstances which was forming in the astute mind of the police. But, to come to facts.

The officers watched the house in Marylebone Road, and the creature who was so roundly and deservedly denounced by counsel at the Old Bailey was discovered and detected.

On the ensuing 2nd of May he was put on his trial, where his wife had stood three months previously.

Strangely enough, Mr. Williams again represented the defence; but not so successfully in this instance, the only point which he urged being the fact of the prosecutors having recovered a quantity of the stolen property, from the information which the prisoner had furnished.

Referring to this subject, the counsel for the prosecution said that the sum of the property recovered was about £800, the value of the diamonds stolen. As to the rest, information had certainly been given with regard to the places where they had been sold, unquestionably very much below their value; but they had been disposed of in a foreign country, and were not likely to be recovered.

It was proved that the prisoner was in great pecuniary difficulty, in consequence of his having been engaged in betting transactions. It also appeared, from a statement that he had made, that the prisoner and his wife had been reading some work of fiction, in which a robbery of this sort was described. They at first ridiculed the notion of such a thing; but it grew upon them, and they then projected and carried out the scheme.

During the whole of the proceedings, there was no incident that more fully illustrated the character of Michael Tarpey than that of a communication which he addressed to Mr. Ryder, after his apprehension.

In this precious epistle he had the audacity to write to the gentleman to apologise for making him the subject of the robbery, which, he said, was originally intended to be committed on a Mr. Harry Emmanuel. Whilst, in the case of Mr. Ryder, there was small consolation in this avowal, Mr. Emmanuel was certainly to be congratulated upon his immunity from the contemplated design upon his property.

It is impossible to get at the drift of the prisoner's little game in this particular manœuvre. Whatever it may have been, the Recorder, after he had been found guilty by the jury, addressed to him some all-too-humane remarks in passing sentence. For some unexplained reason, the indictment which charged the prisoner with administering a noxious drug was not proceeded with, and he was dealt with simply on the charge of robbery, for which he was sent to penal servitude for a period of eight years.

IN a lawsuit respecting boundaries, the counsel on both sides explained their claims on a plan. "My lord," said one, "we lie on this side"; and the other said, "My lord, we lie on this side." "Nay," said the judge, "if you lie on both sides I can believe neither of you."

TWO country fellows, meeting at a country assize, one asked the other, "What news, and how many were condemned to suffer?" The other answered, "This has been the strangest session that ever was in my time. I have not known the like, for there is no execution at all. How strange that so many justices should sit on the Bench, and not one thought proper to be hanged!"

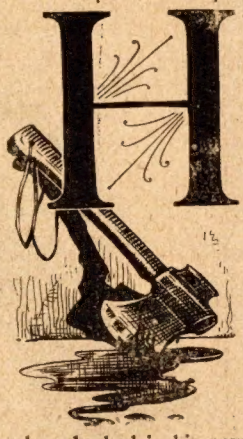
TWO Irish porters meeting in Dublin, one addressed the other with, "Och, Thady, my jewel, is it you? Are you just come from England? Pray, did you see anything of our old friend, Pat Murphy?" "The divil a sight," replied he, "and, what's worse, I'm afraid I never shall." "How so?" "Why, he met wid a very unfortunate accident lately." "Amazing! What was it?" "Oh, indade, nothing more than this. As he was standing on a plank, talking devoutly to a praste, at a place in London which I think dey call the Old Bailey, the plank suddenly gave way, and poor Murphy got his neck broke."

WHEN a sometime celebrated Attorney-General for Ireland was studying the law in the Temple his circumstances were not the best in the world. He often translated and scribbled for the booksellers, but, like "Charles Surface, justice could not keep pace with his generosity," and he was consequently exposed to the insults and pressure of many creditors. Among the rest appeared a very fiend, who watched his motions in such a manner that the good-hearted debtor was obliged to keep his room. As he had many companions to whom he could not refuse admittance he had a square hole cut in the door, with a slide, and opposite to it he placed a looking-glass in such a situation that, on his servant removing the slide, he could from a corner of the room see who called on him, and gave his directions accordingly. A gentleman asked what was his reason for placing the glass in that situation, when the embryo lawyer replied, "That, sir, is my dunometer."

AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY. MANY WERE ARRESTED IN TURN, BUT ALL PROVED THEIR INNOCENCE.

THE MURDER OF HERR RUPPRECHT.

"Poverty is in want of much, but avarice of everything."
—PUBLIUS SYRUS, "Maxims."



HOW rarely is it that we hear of murders which possess abundance of clues, but which remain unfathomable from first to last? Yet this very case which we are now about to relate may be classed in this strange category.

In the early part of the last century there lived in the town of Munich an elderly money-lender, Christopher Rupprecht by name.

The usurer was not like many of his class, genial, confidential, and willing to oblige a client as long as he felt that his money was safe, on the contrary, he was surly, made enemies wherever he went, and was held more or less in universal execration. He was vulgar in the extreme, avaricious beyond all bounds, and disgusting in his personal habits. Those whom he had in his power he bullied, and those whom he had no control over he was insolent to. Altogether in the year 1817 no more unpopular person could be found in the celebrated German town than Christopher, the Miser.

He was then about sixty years of age, and had but one daughter living, a fine, handsome girl, with a vicious temper, who was married to a furrier named Beiringer. His wife had been dead some twelve years, and with the exception of his daughter, all his children had preceded him to the grave.

Always of an abusive and suspicious turn of mind, Rupprecht had even managed to quarrel with Beiringer, one of the most peaceable merchants in the city. By degrees he had estranged all his friends, and only Clara, his sister, and Hogner, a man who lodged in the house with him, would be seen in his company in the public streets. He was shunned by all, and the only amusement which he had was to sit of an evening in the nearest inn, where he was regarded with aversion, though not with contempt, inasmuch as many of the clients of mine host were debtors to silent Christopher. They did not make him at all welcome on the evening of the 7th of February, 1817, when he entered the inn in quest of his customary glass, but for all that, they tolerated him as men in debt are always bound to tolerate the dun.

The evening passed slowly by, and when half-past ten had arrived, the usurer ordered the landlord to fetch another "crug" of beer for him. This boniface was willing enough to do, and left the upper parlour to go down to the tap-room and draw the required liquor. He had done so, and returned to the top of the staircase when he heard a voice below ask if "Herr Rupprecht" was in the building. Without troubling to see who the searcher was, the landlord replied that he was, and that he would send him down directly.

Boniface then entered the parlour where the habituals were assembled, and told the miser that he was wanted by a gentleman down below. "And who may he be?" inquired the usurer.

"I did not see him," was the reply, "but he asked if you would come down and speak to him."

The money-lender, mindful of the fact that the exigencies of his trade respect neither time nor place, and the more awkward the time the more excessive the interest, hurried down the narrow inn stairs to greet his new client, for such he thought him to be.

Hardly a minute had passed when the guests assembled on the first floor heard a sudden fall, followed by groans. At first they thought that they were mistaken, but on hearing the moans repeated, they ran down the steps, fearing lest their hated confrère had slain some unwilling creditor.

But when they reached the foot of the stairs they saw that it was no creditor who was stretched on the flags of the passage. It was Rupprecht himself.

There he lay in the moonlight with his silvery hair stained with the blood which was oozing from a great gash on the top of his head. He was barely conscious, but for all that he kept muttering the words, "The wicked rogue! The wicked rogue! With an axe! With an axe!" Detested as he was, they carried him tenderly upstairs and laid him in bed, while the other guests hunted round the house. On the floor near where the old man was lying they found his leathern cap—he wore leather caps because they were more durable than cloth ones—and on the crown of this was a cut which corresponded with the wound on the head. Outside they could see no one. Not a figure was to be espied in the long street, though it was apparent that the assault had only that instant been committed.

When the old usurer had been placed in bed he was plied with questions, but he continued to mutter to himself in unintelligible phrases until with a sudden impulse he cried, "My daughter! My daughter!"

Immediately it was supposed that he wanted to see his only living child, and a messenger was despatched to fetch Frau Beiringer. By the time she came, however, the old gentleman had relapsed into a comatose state, and it was impossible then to arouse him.

All the neighbouring doctors were called to see to the old miser, and they decided that the operation of trepanning—removing a small portion of the skull to relieve pressure upon the brain—was necessary. This they proceeded to do, and when the patient had slept, after the work of the surgeons was completed, he was able to talk a little.

From the examination of the medical men who were called to see to the patient, it was made clear that the miser had received a blow from a sharp instrument, which was capable of making a wound on the top of the head from four to four and a-half inches in length. It was also supposed that the murderer, or the assailant, must have stood on the stone bench which was outside the house, and from that elevation dealt the blow on the top of the scalp to the old money-lender.

On the following evening the poor Herr Rupprecht was partially conscious again, and being then interrogated, said that the man who assaulted him was one Schmidt, a wood-cutter. Asked where his assailant lived, he repeated that it was in the Most, one of the quarters of the town. This was not considered satisfactory, and it was obvious that the wounded man's brain was still wandering. Two days elapsed, and then again Rupprecht declared that Schmidt was his enemy, and said this time that he lived in the "Hohes Pflaster." Having made this statement, he rapidly sank, and died on the following morning.

Now, regarding all this fact, what was there in the way of a clue? The magistrates first of all assumed that the statements of the dying man were true; a foolish assumption in the first place. Therefore they determined to search out all Schmidts who were wood-cutters, and have them severely cross-examined. After looking through the entire list of Schmidts who followed wood-craft as a business, three were suspected and haled before the judges.

The first to be examined was Abraham Schmidt. He was taken into custody before the actual demise of Mr. Rupprecht, and was brought to the bedside of the dying man so that he might be identified. When first he entered the chamber he avowed that the sick man was not Rupprecht, and later declared that Rupprecht was the usurer, adding that he knew him well, and desired to know what was the matter with him. On this he was severely censured, and told that he should be more careful in his replies. This only confused the poor peasant, who commenced to make a long, rambling statement, saying that at the hour when the murder was committed he was in his mother-in-law's house cutting wooden pegs, but later he again contradicted himself and declared that he had returned to his own home at half-past nine. This confusion only made matters worse, and the Schmidt was remanded in custody.

When searching the prisoner's house the police found a blood-stained hatchet, which they regarded as proof that the woodman had killed the old miser, but Schmidt pointed out that the blood was due to an abrasion which he had on his own hand. "On which hand?" asked the magistrate. "On the right, your worship," replied the accused. "Aha," said the magistrate, "when you are cutting with an axe it would be your left hand which would be nearest to the blade. If your right hand bled, the blood could not reach the axe head!" But the Solon's triumph was short-lived, for it was definitely proved that the wood-cutter was left-handed.

An attempt was then made to show that the axe might have caused the wound, but on comparison it was found that the cut in the miser's cap was an inch and a-half longer than the width of the axe-head, and therefore that weapon could not have been used. The case against this Schmidt was therefore dropped, the police merely remarking that they thought him the biggest fool in Munich.

Two other Schmidts were next arrested, the one called Big Schmidt, and his half-brother, Little Schmidt. They were known to have been well acquainted with Rupprecht, and to a certain extent had been rather friendly with him until he had quarrelled with two of their cronies named Friedmann and Gotz. Then the half-brothers were drawn into the quarrel, and saw nothing of the usurer. These four were examined, but all were able to prove their innocence and show exactly where they were at the time of the outrage.

Thus brought to a standstill, the police still clung to the idea that the old man spoke the truth when he said the name of the murderer was Schmidt, and accordingly they set about examining every person of that name in Munich and the outlying districts. When we mention that the name is as common as Smith in England, the magnitude of the task may be conceived. All the Schmidts being proved innocent, the magistrate thought that the old man perhaps was trying to shield his own assailant, or possibly that he had never seen the coward who slew him at all, and had merely mentioned the name of Schmidt in the wanderings of his mind.

Acting on the first theory, who was the most likely person for the miser to wish to screen? Naturally either his daughter or her husband, Beiringer. Now it will be remembered that Rupprecht had just had a violent quarrel with his son-in-law, and, indeed, he had just sent for his attorney to draw up a fresh will, by which Beiringer should not benefit at all. He had told this to his daughter and to a friend named Hogner, who lived with him. It was a reasonable theory then to suppose that Beiringer had seen fit to remove the old gentleman before he could execute the new will. He was therefore called up for examination, but was found to know nothing of the assault. His character was excellent, and the only thing which the most fastidious could say against him was that he was at loggerheads with his wife, and that was said to be due to her ungovernable temper.

Foiled in settling the guilt on Beiringer, the magistrate next sought to implicate the miser's daughter. It was remarked that she had been most anxious to get Big Schmidt arrested, and moreover it was said that the moment she had reached the old man's side she had seized his keys and secured his property; in fact, it was said that she was much more anxious to get possession of the money-lender's effects than to see him cured. All this looked suspicious, and she was taken before the beak. There she declared that it was at the instance of the doctor that she secured her father's property, for the surgeons had suggested that possibly the murderer might be in the house pillaging it. Furthermore she had gone about her task accompanied by two Government officials. Again she would be much more largely benefited by the provisions of the new will, and it would be against her interests to kill her father before he had signed that document. There was nothing to be said against her except that she had a most ungovernable temper. She therefore was added to the list of the innocent, and a fresh clue had to be found.

A little inquiry from the miser's servant elicited the statement that on the day of the murder, three trumpeters belonging to a regiment quartered in the city had called on him to do business. Where were these three trumpeters? Why had they not come forward to say what they knew? Obviously they must be guilty. Besides, had not the wound in the skull and the cut in the cap been found too big for one made by an axe, but much more like a sabre cut? Of course, the whole thing was quite clear; the trumpeters were the murderers.

A search was instituted, and the three men found. One of them admitted that he had borrowed money from the usurer, and had not the wherewithal to pay. Clearly, therefore, he had a good reason for killing the money-lender. The other two trumpeters said that they had never done any business with Rupprecht, but had merely accompanied their comrade out of good nature, and to see that he was not imposed upon. On this the police formulated a charming theory as to how the murder had been committed. It was quite clear to them that the trumpeter-debtor had returned in the

evening and asked to see the miser again at the inn. While the landlord was calling the old gentleman, the criminal had concealed himself by standing on the stone bench just outside the tavern door, supplied for the convenience of customers. When the usurer came down from the brilliantly-lighted room his eyes were not sufficiently accustomed to the darkness to see whether anybody was outside, so he advanced to the doorway and peered out into the night. At that moment a terrific blow from the trumpeter's sabre felled him to the ground. All this looked so reasonable that the authorities were congratulating themselves on being on the right scent at last. Their hopes, however, fell suddenly when it was definitely proved that the suspected man and one of his fellows were in the barracks all that evening, and the third trumpeter was spending his time in a public-house, which he did not leave till midnight.

Determined to leave no stone unturned, the indefatigable magistrate re-examined a large number of those who had previously been brought before him in the hopes that he might fall on some fresh clue which would bring the villain to justice. After a weary search he learnt from Rupprecht's servant that late on the afternoon of the fatal Friday two young men had called on her master and had been closeted with him for over an hour. Being rather curious, she had managed to get a peep at them through the window, and saw that all three were poring over the table, on which were several papers and a pile of gold.

She thought that she could recognise the man again who was nearest the gold, but she did not see the face of the second stranger. Again the police set out on their hunt. Days passed, but no man answering the description of the wanted stranger could be found. Then one day a knock came to the door of the house formerly occupied by Herr Rupprecht, and a young man asked to see the money-lender.

"What? Don't you know that he is dead?" answered the astonished maid.

"Dead?" replied the stranger. "When did he die?"

"He was wounded on the night of the 7th of February, and only lingered a few days," responded the servant.

"The 7th of February? Why I was with him on that afternoon!" exclaimed the astonished visitor.

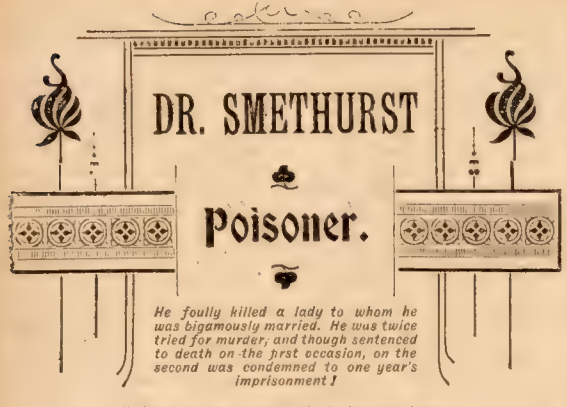
Then like a flash the girl remembered that the gentleman standing before her was he whom she had seen in the parlour on that very day, and who was bending over the money. She said nothing, but went and told the police that she had seen the man they were in search of. They did not take long to run him to earth once they knew that he was in Munich.

THREE TRUMPETERS HAD CALLED.

His amazement when he was charged with murdering the old Shylock was intense, and for the first few minutes he was speechless. Then the humour of the situation struck him, and he burst out laughing. Questioned by the presiding magistrate as to why he laughed, he explained. He had been with the money-lender on the afternoon in question and had borrowed some gold and several letters of credit from him. The second man was a cobbler, who had come to witness the transaction. He was a regimental tailor by trade and wanted the money to purchase more materials, and the accommodation was only required for a short time.

Immediately after leaving the usurer's he had set out for a distant town to make his purchases, and had only that day returned. He only heard of his creditor's death when he went to return him the money. A very little investigation proved that what the tailor said was correct, and of course he was released.

That ended the search for the murderer of Herr Rupprecht.


DR. SMETHURST
Poisoner.
He foully killed a lady to whom he was bigamously married. He was twice tried for murder, and though sentenced to death on the first occasion, on the second was condemned to one year's imprisonment!

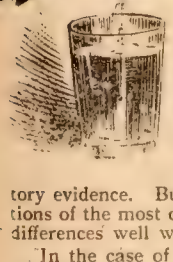
"Trust me, no tortures which the poets feign
Can match the fierce, the unutterable pain
He feels, who, night and day devoid of rest,
Carries his own accuser in his breast."

—GIFFORD, "Juvenal."

PART I.

BEFORE proceeding to record the details of this great case, it may not be deemed uninteresting, at the present time, when this form of man-slaying is so prominently before the public, to make a few prefatory remarks on the subject, suggested by facts discussed at the period of our history.

Murder by poison has formed a very noticeable feature in our criminal annals. The trials of Palmer and Dove in 1856, of Madeleine Smith, in 1857, and of those of Smethurst and Royal, in 1859, besides their general notoriety attracted the attention of the legal profession and of chemists and pathologists in no common degree. The case of Madeleine Smith, notwithstanding the great interest it excited, was, in fact, of least importance, since there was no question that her victim—Angelier—was killed by a coarse dose of arsenic, and the conviction or acquittal of the accused rested solely on the force of the incriminatory evidence. But in the other three cases, scientific questions of the most difficult character arose, presenting specific differences well worthy of consideration.



In the case of Palmer, the chief questions belonging to medical jurisprudence were these—one, whether the convulsions of which Cook died were such that they would have been produced by strychnia, and could not have been produced by any other extrinsic cause, or by natural causes; the other, whether, if strychnia had been administered to him, it was a necessary consequence that strychnia should have been detected in his body. In the Leeds case, the death of Mrs. Dove was unquestionably due to strychnia, and strychnia was discovered in considerable quantity. The Richmond poisoning case, which we shall deal with later more exhaustively, was alleged to have been caused by arsenic, and presents considerable analogy to the first strychnia case, inasmuch as the symptoms were described to be such as would have been produced by arsenic, and could have been produced by no other irritant poison nor by natural causes, yet (except as a very doubtful result) no arsenic was discovered in the body.

Many scientific authorities were of opinion that the symptoms were such as might have originated in natural causes—such as the deceased's subsequently discovered pregnancy—and that, if arsenic had been administered, traces of it must have been discovered. Royal's case presented entirely novel features in accusations of this kind It was the unanimous opinion of the medical witnesses produced by the Crown (the accused called none) that death in this case was not due to natural causes, but to the administration of some irritant poison; but the subsequent examination of the body of the deceased did not disclose the administration of any poison whatever, whether mineral or vegetable; but there was discovered a secreted fluid of a highly poisonous nature, and the intestines were in a state of general inflammation, such as has not been found save where some irritant poison has been taken. What this poisonous secretion was, the scientific witnesses were entirely unable to discover; neither could they offer any proof whether it was a cause of the surrounding disease or was a consequence of it.

The peculiarities of these cases suggests a wide field for inquiry in this region of science; and it greatly concerns the security of mankind and the peace of society that a satisfactory solution of the questions involved should be speedily arrived at.

As the several proceedings against the accused in the present case extended over a period of little less than five months, and occupied in their actual decision eight days, any attempt to comprise the whole case within the limits which can here be assigned to it would be futile. All that can be attempted is to give so much of the arguments of counsel, and the facts proved by the witnesses, as will justify the conclusions at which the juries arrived, and the course taken by the authorities.

By a singular accident, the interests of the public in the Richmond case, already highly excited, was held in suspense and greatly raised by the abrupt close of the first trial, and by the very unusual circumstance of an alleged murderer being tried twice for the same offence on the same indictment.

The first trial commenced at the Central Criminal Court on the 7th of July, 1859, before Chief Baron Pollock.

Thomas Smethurst, 48 years of age, surgeon, was indicted for the wilful murder of Isabella Bankes. The prisoner was a man of small stature and insignificant appearance, with a profusion of reddish-brown hair. Although his age was stated in the calendar to be 48, there was strong reason to suppose that he was several years older. The prisoner, though appearing careworn, maintained great self-possession throughout the proceedings, particularly during the second trial.

Mr. Serjeant Ballantine, after impressing upon the jury the grave responsibility which attached to them in deciding upon so important a case, said that the charge he was about to prefer was one of a most serious character. The allegation of it was that the prisoner at the bar took away the life of a fellow-creature by poison, and likewise contrived to throw round the means he resorted to to destroy life some more than ordinary difficulties in the detection of the crime, and in order to effect this purpose, he had availed himself of the knowledge he possessed, and made use of a slow, irritant poison, which he administered with his own hands, until by the accumulation of poison and irritation the poor woman sunk and died, whilst every means was taken by him from the beginning to the end to shroud the whole affair in the deepest mystery.

The prisoner was represented to be a member of the medical profession. He had considerable knowledge of medicine, and was known as Dr. Smethurst. He was a married man, and had a wife considerably older than himself, who was then living. At the time he was residing with his wife at a respectable lodging-house in Rifle Terrace, Bayswater. While they were living there, Miss Isabella Bankes also came there to reside. She was a lady of very respectable family, and was possessed of property under her own control to the extent of £1,700 or £1,800, and of a life interest in £5,000, which, at her death, went to other members of her family.

In the autumn of 1858 Miss Bankes went to reside in the house where Dr. Smethurst and his wife was living, and an intrigue sprung up between the parties. In November, the landlady, considering there was too great an intimacy between Dr. Smethurst and Miss Bankes, spoke to her about it, and the result was that that lady left the house. On the 9th of December, Miss Bankes and the prisoner went to a church at Battersea, and were secretly married, and two days after went to reside at Richmond.

It was evident that Dr. Smethurst did not intend this marriage to be permanent, and this was proved in a letter to his wife which was found upon him when he was taken in custody. From the time of the wedding, nothing was heard of them till the 28th February, when Miss Louisa Bankes, the sister of Miss Bankes, received a letter from her, but not addressed from the place where they were living. On the 15th of February she received another letter from her. At that time Dr. Smethurst and Miss Bankes were living together as man and wife, at Old Palace Gardens, Richmond. Miss Bankes was then in good health, but about the 28th of March her illness commenced. On the 3rd of April, Dr. Smethurst decided to have medical advice. The landlady advised calling in Dr. Julius, as he and his partner, Dr. Bird, were the most eminent practitioners in Richmond. The former treated her in the ordinary way for diarrhœa, the

complaint he understood she was suffering from. He obtained all his information from Dr. Smethurst with regard to her symptoms, and he received them with confidence, as Dr. Smethurst professed great medical knowledge.

Dr. Julius consulted with him all through. He took the most active part in the matter, and sometimes pressed upon them the use of certain medicines. But neither Dr. Julius nor Dr. Bird, in any of their visits, had ever been allowed to be alone with the patient.

On the 15th of April the parties left Old Palace Gardens, and went to reside at No. 10, Alma Villas. Miss Bankes was very weak then, and had to be taken in a cab. She was carried upstairs, and never after came down alive. Dr. Julius, when he found that the remedies which he applied to the deceased had a directly contrary effect to what they were intended, requested Dr. Bird to see her, but did not mention his suspicions on the subject, although they were strong.

On the 18th of April Dr. Bird saw her, and prescribed for her, but with the same result as his partner. At this time the lady was sinking daily. On the 18th of April Dr. Smethurst wrote a letter to Miss Louisa Bankes, which was marked "private and confidential." It stated that her sister was very ill and desired to see her. She was to ask for Dr. and Mrs. Smethurst, and was "not to breathe a word of the contents of the note to anyone."

Miss Bankes was not at this time aware of the marriage ceremony that had been performed, and had her own views of her sister's conduct. She, however, on the following day, went to Richmond and found her sister in bed in a very feeble state. The deceased, when she saw her sister, made use of the expression, "Oh! don't say anything about it; it will be all right when I get well, won't it, dear?" turning to Dr. Smethurst, who said, "Yes, it will be all right soon."

Throughout the illness of the deceased Dr. Smethurst showed her every kindness and attention, and to her death she treated him with love and affection. But it was a remarkable circumstance that during the time Miss Bankes remained, she was never for one moment left alone with her. While she was there the prisoner gave the deceased a saline draught, and she vomited immediately after it, and complained of its having a bad taste. Miss Bankes then offered to make some tapioca, but the prisoner objected on the ground that there was no milk. Subsequently she offered to make some arrowroot, and to that he also objected, lest the landlady should not like it. She left that evening, and the next day wrote an affectionate letter to her sister, and received an answer from Dr. Smethurst containing this passage:

"After your departure, dear Bella had a very bad evening and night of it, purely from the excitement of seeing you, and the fatigue consequent thereon. Vomiting and purging set in at a fearful rate, which of course prostrated her greatly. The doctor at once forbade any visitors at the present, or he would not be responsible for the effects attendant thereon."

WENT TO A CHURCH AT BATTERSEA AND WERE SECRETLY MARRIED.

There was no doubt that after Miss Bankes left, Dr. Smethurst made such representations to Dr. Bird as induced him to say that she had better not see visitors at present. On subsequent days she received other letters from Dr. Smethurst postponing her intended visits from time to time, describing her sister's condition, and mentioning that he had insisted on having a consultation between "Dr. Todd, the first physician of the day, and the two regular medical attendants, who are also the first doctors of the place." One of these letters was dated April 30, but no mention of the extraordinary circumstance that on that day he had instructed a respectable attorney of Richmond to draw up a will upon a draft which he said had been prepared by a barrister in London, but which was in fact entirely in his own handwriting.

On the following day (Sunday) he called on the attorney, and, representing the case to be urgent, on account of the lady's illness, induced him to go to Miss Bankes's lodgings, and the will was formally executed. By this will Miss Bankes left the whole of her property to Dr. Smethurst.

The prisoner's statement that he had insisted upon a consultation between Dr. Todd and the Richmond doctors proved to be quite correct. Dr. Todd did attend the lady, but after a short time came to the conclusion—at which Drs. Julius and Bird had already arrived—that the patient was suffering from unfair treatment. On the 29th, Dr. Smethurst wrote that Dr. Todd not only acquiesced in what was being done, but recommended a perseverance in the treatment, with some slight additions of his own. This was not the fact; but the prisoner was not made aware of the suspicions entertained by the medical attendants. These gentlemen caused the evacuations of the patient to be tested, and the result was so confirmatory of their views that they at once communicated with the police, and the prisoner was taken into custody. A great number of bottles containing drugs and medicine were taken possession of, and on Smethurst's person was found the following letter to his legal wife, sealed and stamped for the post, and to which some reference has been already made:

"Monday, May 2, 1859.

"My Dear Mary,—I have not been able to leave for town as I expected, in consequence of my medical aid being required in a case of illness. I shall, however, see you as soon as possible. Should anything unforeseen prevent my leaving for town before the 11th, I will send you a cheque for Smith's money and extras. I will send £5. I am quite well, and hope you are the same, and that I shall find you so when I see you, which I trust will not be long first. Present my kind regards to the Smiths and all old friends of the house. I heard from James the other day, and he said he had called on you, but that you had gone out for a walk. With best love, believe me, yours affectionately,

"Thomas Smethurst."

In the opinion of the Richmond magistrates, the case against the prisoner was not sufficiently strong to justify his committal, and he was discharged. On the following day Miss Bankes died. The circumstances which had already transpired rendered an inquest indispensable, and the result of the inquiry was that the prisoner was committed to take his trial on a charge of wilful murder.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

Lord Mansfield, being willing to save a man who had stolen a watch, desired the jury to value it at tenpence, upon which the prosecutor cried out, "Tenpence, my lord! Why, the very fashion of it cost me five pounds!" "Oh," said his lordship, "we must not hang a man for fashion's sake!"

One of the criminals under sentence of death in Newgate was visited by the Ordinary, who gravely urged him to acknowledge the justice of his sentence, etc., to which the culprit answering, the divine demanded to know whether he renounced the devil and all his works. The poor fellow shrugged his shoulders and replied that "he begged to be excused, for, as he was going to a strange country, he did not wish to make himself any enemies."

Two lawyers, when a knotty cause was o'er,
Shook hands, although they wrangled hard before;
"La!" said the client who was cast, "pray how
Can you be friends that were such foes just now?"
"You fool!" says one, "we lawyers, though so keen,
Like shears ne'er cut ourselves—but what's between!"

Half-Hanged Smith and Pat Mahony

No living man can send me to the Shades
Before my time.
HOMER.—"The Iliad" (Bk. vi.)

TWO criminals who, having "danced on nothing," revived on being cut down. The latter gave three cheers, on which a friend silenced him forever with a shillelah.

MANY instances are on record, and will duly appear in our pages, of people who have had narrow escapes on the threshold of the gallows; of reprieves which came just in the nick of time, and of people who, having been duly "turned off" by the hangman, yet lived to tell the tale, even to commit further crimes.

We purpose in this brief sketch giving mention of but two criminals whose escapes were of this touch-and-go order; simply because their crimes were so very ordinary that they can be briefly referred to. As other similar cases crop up, the criminals and their misdeeds will claim much longer description. So, prythee, dear reader, be patient. We have many good things in store for you. And now we'll commence with that rascal, John Smith. He was the son of a farmer at Malton, about fifteen miles from the city of York, who bound him apprentice to a packer in London, with whom he served his time, and afterwards worked as a journeyman. He then went to sea on board a man-of-war, and was at the expedition against Vigo; but on his return from that service he was discharged. He afterwards enlisted as a soldier in the regiment of Guards commanded by Lord Cutts; but in this station he soon made bad connections, and engaged with some of his dissolute companions as a housebreaker. On the 5th of December, 1705, he was arraigned on four different indictments, on two of which he was convicted. While he lay under sentence of death, he seemed very little affected with his situation, absolutely depending on a reprieve, through the interest of his friends. An order, however, came for his execution on the 24th day of the same month, in consequence of which he was carried to Tyburn, where he performed his devotions, and was turned off in the usual manner; but when he had hung near fifteen minutes, there was, "of a sudden," as Rider Haggard writes in these modern days, a great commotion on the outskirts of the crowd of spectators, who had come, as Ingoldsby wrote in the good old days, "to see a man die in his shoes."

Smith had ceased his aerial jig, for in the times of which we write it was customary only to allow the wretched criminal a drop of a few inches. It was not until Marwood superseded Calcraft that the long drop came in, and the breaking of the wretched creature's neck sent him out of his misery instantly.

Smith hung limp and apparently lifeless. While he had a kick left, the crowd gazed on his body, and any interruption coming from the outskirts did not attract attention. But at last a few noticed a new arrival, who had dashed up on horseback. The newcomer was in a deplorable plight; his head was bleeding, and one arm hung helpless at his side. He had been thrown from his horse when it stumbled in turning a corner too quickly. Only two words could he gasp out: "A reprieve!" and he pointed with his uninjured hand to his pocket, from which he was unable to extricate the all-important document.

Then there was a hullabaloo! The crowds in front, still watching for a sign of expiring life in the hanging body of John Smith, could not be made to understand the terrible import of the news. Try as those behind would to force their way to the front, those already there determined to keep their places.

Again and again did those who knew the state of affairs yell "Reprieve! Reprieve!" The officials at the gallows could not, or would not, understand. Needless to say it

was rather a frequently attempted trick, and officials in those days were not to be gammoned.

Fifteen minutes had elapsed from the time John Smith's neck was tightened before the authorities were made to grasp the situation. And then they cut John down!

He was carried to a house in the neighbourhood, restoratives were applied; he was—as was usual in those times—bled. Then, after some time, he revived.

When he perfectly recovered his senses, he was asked what were his feelings at the time of execution, to which he replied, in substance, as follows: "That when he was turned off, he, for some time, was sensible of very great pain, occasioned by the weight of his body, and felt his spirits in a strange commotion, violently pressing upwards; that having forced their way to his head, he, as it were, saw a great blaze, or glaring light, which seemed to go out at his eyes with a flash, and then he lost all sense of pain. That after he was cut down, and began to come to himself, the blood and spirits, forcing themselves into their former channels, put him, by a sort of pricking or shooting, to such intolerable pain, that he could have wished those

SOMETHING LIKE AN IRISH WAKE

hanged who had cut him down." From this circumstance he was called "Half-hanged Smith." After this narrow escape from the grave, Smith pleaded to his pardon on the 20th of February, and was discharged; yet such was his propensity to evil deeds, that he returned to his former practices, and, being apprehended, was again tried at the Old Bailey, for housebreaking; but some difficulties arising in the case, the affair was left to the opinion of the twelve judges, who determined in favour of the prisoner. After this second extraordinary escape, he was a third time indicted; but the prosecutor happening to die before the day of trial, he once more obtained that liberty which his conduct showed he had not deserved.

We have no account of what became of this man after this third remarkable incident in his favour; but charity inclines us to hope that he made a proper use of the singular dispensation of Providence evidenced in his own person.

It was not unfrequently the case, that, in Dublin, men were formerly seen walking about who, it was known, had been sentenced to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, and upon whom, strange as it may appear to unenlightened eyes, the sentence had been carried out. The custom in those days was that the body should hang only half-an-hour; and, in a mistaken lenity, the sheriff, in whose hands was entrusted the execution of the law, would look away, after the prisoner had been turned off, while the friends of the culprit would hold up their companion by the waistband of his breeches, so that the rope should not press upon his throat. They would, at the expiration of the usual time, thrust their "deceased" friend into a cart, in which they would gallop him over all the stones and rough ground they came near, which was supposed to be a never-failing recipe, in order to revive him, professedly, and indeed in reality, with the intention of "waking" him. An affair is related of a fellow named Pat Mahony, who had been convicted of the murder of a Connaught man, in one of the numerous Munster and Connaught wars, and whose execution had been managed in the manner above described, who, being put into the cart in a coffin by his Munster friends, on his way home was so revived, and so overjoyed at finding himself still alive, that he sat upright and gave three hearty cheers, by way of assuring his friends of his safety. A "jintleman" who was shocked at this indecent conduct in his defunct companion, and who was, besides, afraid of their scheme being discovered and thwarted, immediately, with the sapling which he carried, hit him a thump on the head, which effectually silenced his self-congratulations. On their arrival at home they found that the "friendly" warning which had been given to the poor wretch had been more effectual than the hangman's rope; and the wailings and lamentations which had been employed at the place of execution to drown the encouraging cries of the aiders of the criminal's escape, were called forth in reality at his wake on the same night. It was afterwards a matter of doubt whether the fellow who dealt the unfortunate blow ought not to have been charged with the murder of his half-hanged companion; but "a justice" being consulted, it was thought no one could be successfully charged with the murder of a man who was already dead in law.

LORD NORBURY was asking the reason of the delay that happened in a cause, and he was answered it was because Mr. Serjeant Joy, who was to lead, was absent, but Mr. Hope, the solicitor, had said that he would return immediately, when his lordship humorously repeated the well-known lines:

"Hope told a flattering tale,
That joy would soon return."

Poisons;

THE MYSTERIOUS DRUGS which silently deal death, now popularly described for the first time . .

STRYCHNINE AND NUX VOMICA.

STRYCHNINE shares with aconite the quality of being a particularly brutal poison, causing the sufferer agonies before depriving him of his reason and life. For this reason little mercy is shown to the user of this terrible drug.

Nux vomica, or poison berry, is said to have been known to the Arabians as far back as the fifth century, but owing to the laxness with which Arab physicians named their remedies and poisons, it is extremely doubtful whether their "dilata" was identical with the drug so named to-day. The first really reliable record of the existence of the berries of strychnos nux vomica in the pharmacy is met with in the text-books of medicine of the seventeenth century, where the powdered berries are recommended for poisoning vermin and birds. But though nux vomica was not used in medicine till the end of the seventeenth century, its active principle, strychnine, produced its medicinal effect as it does to-day, being administered in the form of "St. Ignatius Bean," a berry brought back from India by the Jesuit missionaries. This bean, which was administered for fever and as a tonic, contains about one per cent. of strychnine, and was a very safe method of administration.

In 1818 the celebrated chemists, Pelletier and Carenton, investigated the properties of several of the medicinal herbs and berries which were brought from the East, and among them the two berries, nux vomica and "St. Ignatius Bean." Exhaustive experiments showed them that the active principle of both of these drugs was a white crystalline substance, which they named strychnine, and since nux vomica is far more plentiful than the Jesuits' famous berries, it is now the principal source of the alkaloid.

The strychnos nux vomica shrub, from which the valuable seeds are obtained, is a member of the botanical family of Loganiacæ, and has the dark, shining leaves so typical of that order. When in seed it produces long, cylindrical beans or pods, from which a number of disk-shaped seeds, about the size of a shilling, are extracted. The seeds are slightly hollow on one side, and the centre of the opposite side is raised correspondingly. They are covered with fine silky hairs, which radiate from the centre to the edge, and give the seed a very striking appearance, owing to the reflection of the light falling on it. In colour, nux vomica seeds are light brown, greenish grey, or silver grey, according to the state of maturity at which they were gathered. They are very tough and difficult to powder in a mortar.

The principal source of the supply is the Malabar coast of India, where the natives have acquired the habit of eating the seeds as a preventive to snake poisons. Some authors declare that the strychnine eaters enjoy immunity from the effects of the venom of the cobra, but the Commission on Snakes and their Poisons, which sat in the years 1898 and 1899, declare that there is no reliance to be placed in the drug. Be that as it may, few of the jungle dwellers in the South of India would be without their packet of nux vomica seeds.

The active principle of nux vomica, as we have said, is strychnine, but the seeds also contain another alkaloid called brucine, which resembles strychnine in all its characteristics, but is only one-sixth of its strength, and it is with this drug that Dumas tells us, in his novel "Monte Cristo," Madame de Villefort attempted to poison half a household. With brucine we have nothing to do beyond mentioning that every description applied to strychnine applies equally to its ally, brucine, and recording the fact that some few years ago a number of brewers were heavily fined for putting brucine into their beer to enhance its bitterness.

Strychnine gives a colourless solution of an intensely bitter taste, which can be distinctly detected, even if diluted six hundred thousand times. It is a very powerful poison, and it must be considered that a dose of one-third of a grain administered by the mouth, or one-twentieth of a grain injected hypodermically, constitutes a dangerous dose. In the case of a child, one-sixteenth of a grain given by the mouth proved fatal in four hours, while Dr. Warner succumbed twenty minutes after he had taken a third of a grain of strychnine.

The symptoms of strychnine poisoning are very marked. Some time after the administration of the drug the victim experiences a sense of restlessness, accompanied by a feeling of impending suffocation. Then the face is drawn into a characteristic grin, due to the contractions of the facial muscles. This grin is known as the risus sardonicus. Following this the muscles are violently and spasmodically contracted, the patient being bent and doubled up into all sorts of shapes. At one moment he may be bent double like a bow, resting on his heels and head; at the next he may be jerked off the bed through the violent contraction of other muscles. The paroxysms last for several minutes, and are succeeded by a period of rest, during which the sufferer complains of great exhaustion and of intense thirst. Then another attack comes on, and the patient suffers further agony. The muscles of the stomach become hard and tense, the face livid, the eyeballs staring and prominent. Still the patient is fully conscious, though often unable to speak owing to the fixture of the jaw by a species of lockjaw. The slightest touch will often throw the sufferer into violent convulsions. The pulse becomes so rapid during the spasmodic attacks as to be uncountable. As the effects progress, the attacks follow one another with increasing rapidity, and in one of them the victim dies from suffocation, due to the paralysing of the respiratory muscles. There may be an interval between the administration of the drug and the commencement of the symptoms, of two or even three hours, but once the symptoms are developed, it is a question of speedy death or equally speedy recovery.

There are any number of antidotes which can be applied by medical men, but they are not uniformly successful. There are, however, few which are to be found in the possession of a layman. Tannin in large quantities, strong tea, leaves and all, or coffee and coffee grounds should be administered immediately, and may be followed by large doses of alcohol, in quantities far greater than a healthy man could take. Doctors have each their own favourite antidote, which, in their hands, are often successful. Among the most used are bromide of potash, chloral, injections of physostigmine, opium, and hemlock; while some immediately put the patient under the influence of chloroform or ether.

Being such a violent poison, it is not easy to procure strychnine at a chemist's shop, but it is abundantly sold to the public by oilmen and grocers in the form of insect powder and vermin destroyers, which consist usually of flour, soot, and strychnine, or flour, Prussian blue, and strychnine. The quantities in which these mixtures are sold contain fatal doses of the alkaloid.

Till comparatively recent years there was no accurate method of detecting strychnine in the body after death, and it was on this that Dr. Palmer, the Rugeley murderer, relied for safety when he poisoned his wife, brother, and friend with strychnine. However, shortly before Palmer started on his poisoning career, an absolutely accurate test for the poison had been discovered, and had the country doctor kept up his medical knowledge instead of neglecting his profession for the turf, he would never have selected strychnine as his death-dealer. As it was, after a prolonged trial, which was conducted at the Central Criminal Court, Palmer was found guilty, and was duly taken back to the county gaol at Stafford, where he was hanged in June, 1856.

The notorious Neil Cream made use of strychnine to murder the unfortunate women whom he picked up on the streets. He posed as a doctor, and gave them strychnine in large doses, enclosed in capsules to hide the taste, informing the poor girls that the capsules would prevent their disgrace being known. The skill with which the murder of four unfortunates was brought home to him reflected great credit on the police.

The long-continued effect of the muscular contraction set up by strychnine was well shown in this case. Matilda Clover, who was murdered in October, was not exhumed till the following May, but the rigidity in the limbs and fingers was still maintained. Cream was duly executed in Newgate Gaol.

Another important case in which strychnine was used to destroy life was the Horsford case, in which a farmer named Walter Horsford was convicted of murdering his cousin, Annie Holmes, at St. Neots, in 1897. The case was undoubtedly the outcome of the Neil Cream murders, for Horsford administered the strychnine to his cousin for the same alleged purpose as did Neil—namely, to procure abortion. At the inquest on Annie Holmes, Horsford swore that he had never seen the woman, and did not know her except by name. Among the dead woman's effects were packets of strychnine, with instructions in Horsford's handwriting on them, together with several letters from him to his victim. On this he was arrested on a charge of perjury, and later the charge of murder was added to it. He was tried before Judge Hawkins in June, 1898, and convicted of both

offences. In this case, again, the extraordinary lasting power of the strychnine contractions was manifested, as well as the length of time which the alkaloid will remain in the body unaffected. The analyst to the Home Office extracted three and a-half grains of strychnine from the body, even though it was badly decomposed and had been in the grave for nineteen days.

As a means of suicide, strychnine has been used on many occasions, but of late years the number of persons who make away with themselves by means of strychnine has decreased very much, owing, doubtless, to the publicity given to the dreadfully painful death caused by the drug.

On several occasions there have been accidental deaths through the alkaloid, or the powdered seeds, being mistaken for other medicines. Not very long ago a patient was given thirty grains of the powdered nux vomica seeds in mistake for Peruvian bark. The amount of strychnine contained in the dose was only a third of a grain, yet the man died in a few hours. Children have several times met their deaths through tasting the vermin-killers which have been left about the house by people who were ignorant of their nature.

There can be no doubt that with the knowledge of the effects of strychnine and the accurate methods of analysis which have now been perfected, no person could administer a fatal dose of the alkaloid to another without detection. As little as one six-hundredth of a grain can be separated out of a body, and to this absolutely distinctive tests can be applied. This is a fortunate provision of science, for the alkaloid is far too dangerous a weapon to place in the hands of the person with poisoning instincts, and only the certainty of detection restrains the hands of many a prospective poisoner.

SANGUINARY MURDER.

A MAN who resided near the Dry-lands, in New York, having to pay a sum of £800, called on a neighbour, who kept a public-house, and mentioned the circumstance, observing that he had the whole amount at home, except £15, which he wished to borrow. The landlord agreed to lend him the above sum, but stated that he must wait till the next day, as he should go out to collect some debts, when, if he would call, he should have what he wanted. He accordingly went at the appointed time, and having waited the whole evening, was prevailed on by the landlord's wife to stay all night, her husband not having come home, on whose return she promised to call him; he accordingly retired to bed, but was soon disturbed by terrifying dreams, on which he awoke a pedlar, who had taken up his residence in the same room for the night, and informed him that he had dreamed his house was on fire, and his wife and children enveloped in the flames. The pedlar endeavoured to pacify him, but without effect, as he determined on going home immediately; finding he could not prevail on him to return to his bed, and feeling an interest in the dream, he agreed to accompany him, taking with him a pair of pistols, well-loaded. On approaching the house, they were alarmed (the night being dark) by seeing a bright light in the lower apartment, and on approaching the window, they beheld three men, with blackened faces, counting out money on the table. Each of the spectators singled out his man, and shot two of the plunderers dead; the third was met at the door, endeavouring to escape, but, being overcome with conscious guilt, he made very little resistance, and soon shared the fate of his companions. The agitated husband then went into his bedroom, where he found his wife and three young children weltering in their blood, having apparently been murdered in their sleep. On washing the faces of the robbers, they proved to be near neighbours, who were intimately connected with the family.

A COUNTRY baker, having occasion to call at the house of a certain justice of the peace, as he was riding out through a great court, saw a parcel of fat geese, and, catching up one, whipped it into his basket. The justice, by chance espying him from one of the windows, called after him, saying, "Bak-er! bak-er!" To which the baker replied, "I will, sir! I will, sir!" and rode away as fast as he could. Some days after the justice sent a warrant for him, and demanded of him how he dare carry away his goose in that manner. To which he replied, "I have done nothing but what your worship commanded me, for your worship bid me bake her, and that I have done in a good pie, and drank your lordship's health when eating of it." The justice, for the sake of the jest, excused the baker.

A NOTORIOUS cunning thief, upon being taken up, applied for a peace warrant against the justice, as, he said, he stood in fear of his life from him.

THE TRAGEDY OF "IRELAND'S EYE."

"It is undoubtedly the speech of the nymph Echenias, the mistress of Daphnis, upbraiding for his incontinent passion; for he had been guilty of a breach of promise to her, and had offended her by following other women."

—FAWKES, "Theocritus."

PART I.

UP to the date of the trial of William Bourke Kirwan, who was indicted at the Commission Court, Dublin, on December 9, 1852, for the murder of his wife of two months, that ancient city had enjoyed considerable immunity from the taint of capital crime. The chroniclers of the period naturally boast of this, for it was between ten and twelve years since a conviction for this crime was recorded in either city or county, when the depraved and ignorant Delahunt paid the last penalty of the law at Kilmainham. But perhaps never in the history of Ireland, or perhaps in any other land, was a tragedy accompanied by so many romantic environments.

The mystery in which the case was involved, the silence in which the death of the unhappy lady was in the first instance passed over, the gradual awakening of suspicion, the discovery of motives pointing to a violent solution, and the final uncertainty in which the whole affair remained unbalanced gave to this case a universal interest.

It is difficult in a case of circumstantial evidence, where the inferences are to be drawn from facts stated by prejudiced or insufficient observers, and where the judgment of the juror must be guided in some degree by the manner of the witnesses, to give an abstract which shall present the same case at length.

The prisoner had been married to the deceased for twelve years, but had no family. During the whole of that period, however, the prisoner had lived with another woman, by whom he had a large family of children. During the greater part of each day he was occupied in his profession as an artist, as an anatomical draughtsman, or in colouring maps for a respectable gentleman residing in the City of Dublin; but the greater part of his time was spent with Teresa Kenny, the woman to whom reference has been made, and although he had been twelve years the husband of Maria Kirwan, and had eight children during that period of time by Teresa Kenny, neither Maria Kirwan nor Teresa Kenny had the slightest idea that he was attached to another person.

Mrs. Kirwan believed that she was the sole possessor of his affections, and the same belief was entertained by Teresa Kenny. The thing was so well managed that it was not until within the last six months that either of these knew there was another person who had a claim upon his attentions.

However, at that time such a discovery did actually take place. The ordinary abode of Mr. Kirwan was Upper Merrion Street, but in the month of June he and his wife, Maria Kirwan, took a lodging at Howth for the advantages of bathing and fresh air. He employed himself in sketching the interesting scenery of the locality, and they were to have remained there until the 7th of September.

There is a little island in the vicinity of Howth, which is known as "Ireland's Eye." This island the prisoner and his wife had frequently visited; and on Monday, the day of the murder, they proceeded to Howth Harbour at ten o'clock, in order to cross over to the island, having with them a basket, a carpet bag, two bottles, and a sketch-book. They were landed on the island, and the boat immediately afterwards returned to Howth Harbour. Two parties were landed on the island the same day, who saw Mr. Kirwan, but they quitted the spot before four o'clock, and at that hour it was clear that no persons remained on the island except Mr. Kirwan and his wife, Maria Kirwan.

It had been arranged that a boat should come to take

them back at eight o'clock. A person of the name of Hugh Campbell, who was leaning on the harbour wall at Howth, saw the boat in question—which belonged to a man named Nangle—leave the harbour and go to the island at the hour of eight o'clock. But before that a matter of considerable importance attracted the attention of Campbell. About an hour or so before the boat went over he heard a loud cry coming from the island, which was more than once repeated. Other persons on the shore, and some men in a boat which was passing by the island, also heard cries about the same time.

The island lay directly opposite the harbour at Howth, the nearest point to the latter being a place called Broad Patch, situate in the extreme east end of the island. Slanting to the west from this place were two strands, one of which was

"OH, MARIA! MARIA!"

considerably longer than the other—that at the west end leading towards the remains of a martello tower, and being one of the points at which boats usually landed, and which was the place at which Mr. and Mrs. Kirwan were deposited on the 6th of September.

Upon a flat ground, between the tower and the Black Patch, were the ruins of an old church, and at the back of the Black Patch, at a part of the island which was out of view from Howth Harbour, was a place called the Long Hole, into which the tide came, and which was always filled with water when it was fully in. But when the tide was completely out, the Long Hole was left altogether dry.

Now, the cries to which we have referred, according to the witnesses, came from the direction of the Long Hole, and it was apparent that cries coming from that part of the island could be heard at the various places where the different persons who had heard them were stationed that evening.

A eight o'clock the boat left the harbour at Howth, with four boatmen. When they reached the island it was dark. The boatmen called out to Mr. Kirwan, and at first were unable to see him, but after a short time he came down towards the boat, and desired one of them to go up and fetch his bag. A conversation then took place, and the boatman asked the prisoner where the mistress was, to which he made answer that he had not seen her since the shower—meaning a shower of rain which fell at six o'clock—when she went to the tower to bathe.

The boatmen then suggested that a search should be made for her, and accordingly Michael Nangle and the prisoner proceeded in the direction of the Long Hole, passing up round the church towards the Black Patch. Having failed in finding Mrs. Kirwan, they returned to the boat, and told the other boatmen that they had not succeeded in their search. Patrick Nangle then proposed to renew the search, and he, accompanied by the prisoner and Michael Nangle, went through a considerable portion of the island, until at length they came to the Long Hole. Patrick Nangle, who was in advance of the others, said, "Come, let us make a good search," and, accordingly, he went to the east and Michael Nangle to the west side, so as to make an accurate examination of the place.

In the middle of the Long Hole was a very high rock. Patrick Nangle went to one side of the rock and Michael Nangle to the other; but just as Patrick Nangle was moving towards the place where the body was found, Mr. Kirwan slipped and fell, and the consequence of his fall was to delay the progress of the Nangles, and it would appear that at the very instant of Mr. Kirwan's fall Patrick Nangle perceived something white, and on proceeding to the spot where it was, found it proved to be the prisoner's wife.

On the 6th of September high water took place at 3.30 o'clock. At seven o'clock, when the cries were heard, at eight o'clock, when the boatmen went over the island, at nine o'clock, when the first search was made, the tide was still receding, and at ten o'clock, when the body was found, it was low water. There was a small rock at the Long Hole, and on this rock the body was found. At the time it was

found that the rock was quite dry, and the tide was removed six feet from it. Mrs. Kirwan was found lying on the rock on her back, with her bathing-dress gathered up under her arms, and partly under her body was found a bathing sheet. Her bathing-cap was missing, and the body was certainly warm when found by Patrick Nangle at ten o'clock.

So soon as Patrick found the body, he called out to his companions, but it appeared that he was for some time engaged in arranging it so as to give it a decent look before they came to the place where it was. When they arrived at the spot, Mr. Kirwan rushed forward, threw himself on the body, and exclaimed, "Oh, Maria! Maria!" and then he turned to the boatman and said, "Go and fetch her clothes." Patrick and Michael obeyed, but, being unable to find them, returned to the prisoner, who, on learning that their search had proved ineffectual, said, "I will go with you myself."

He then went himself, and after a short time returned and said that if they went up to the rock they would find the clothes. Patrick then went up and found the clothes in a place which he had searched a little before, but without success. The two boatmen proceeded to the boat, leaving the prisoner with the body, and it took nearly an hour to bring the boat round to the Long Hole where the body was. The latter was then tenderly wrapped up in a sail, placed in the boat, and conveyed to Howth.

The body when found lay on its back, the face had some marks of scratches upon it, and blood was issuing from part of the breast, from the ears, and from another part of the body. When the boat containing the body arrived at Howth, it was observed that the sail which enveloped the body was saturated with the blood which had flowed from the wounds upon it. It was taken in a car to the house of a Mrs Campbell, at Howth, where the Kirwans had lodged, and was washed by three women.

On the following day an inquest was held in the village inn, the principal witness being the prisoner himself. The two boatmen and a medical student were also examined, and the matter was speedily brought to a termination, the verdict being, "that the lady had been drowned while bathing at Ireland's Eye."

When the body was found there was very little water about the rock on which it lay, and it was noted that the neck of the bathing-dress of the deceased was untied, the arms were stiffened out from the body, and, in criticising the verdict of the jury, the prosecuting counsel dwelt upon several attributes relating to the circumstances. He protested that the appearance of the body was not at all like what it would be if the case had been one of accidental drowning. If it was a case of the kind, would the sheet have been partly under the body? Could any imaginable accidental circumstance have placed the sheet in such a position as that?

There was a long-sustained battle between the doctors on these points, two eminent surgeons for the defence emphatically asserted that, in their judgment, all the symptoms proved were quite consistent with the idea that the deceased had died of epilepsy. The great flow of blood might arise from congestion, and congestion would be produced by bathing or immersion in cold water on a full stomach. Dr Rynd, who was one of the professional witnesses, said that he had once seen a patient from all parts of whose body blood was exuding. It was not uncommon for persons to scream frequently in epileptic seizures; the first scream would certainly be the most violent.

On these matters the doctors wrangled interminably; one party declaring that their knowledge of medicine led them to believe that murder had been committed, while their equally learned colleagues scouted any such idea.

The medical evidence, indeed, had so much of interest in it, that it will be instructive to dwell on the subject; but it becomes necessary here that we should halt. The remaining portion of this extraordinary case will be found of more than ordinary interest.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

At a general assizes, in Queen Elizabeth's days, two plain country fellows having some business there, were gazing upon the bench until the time they should be called, discoursing between themselves. Said the one to the other, "I much wonder at one thing, and would be glad to be satisfied." The other, asking what he wished to know, was answered, "I have often mused with myself why all the judges go shaven, and there is no appearance of a beard to be seen amongst them all." To which the other replied, "Neighbour, that is a doubt which is easily settled, for in this place they ought to wear no beards, for you ought to know they represent her majesty!"

Catherine Wilson.

"There I saw how the secret felon wrought,
And treason labouring in the traitor's thought."
—DRYDEN, "Palamon and Arcite."

THE SECRET POISONER.

PART II.

MR. BARNES, the half-brother of the deceased, said that she was a widow, and resided at the address which we have already given. She died on the 18th of October, 1856. A few days previously, she was in perfect health, and joined her family at the dinner-table. The prisoner came to lodge at deceased's home about Christmas, 1855, and she became on very intimate terms with Mrs. Soames, who frequently joined the prisoner in her room.

On the 15th October, the latter paid a visit to her brother, returning home between four and five o'clock, and the family all "tead" together. During the progress of the repast the prisoner presented herself, and told Mrs. Soames that she wanted to speak to her, and she went to her room. At six o'clock on the following morning Mrs. Soames sought her daughter, Mrs. Ann Naacke, and told her she was very ill, and must go to bed again, and she did so. Later on, she became very sick, and complained of great pain in her chest, and she vomited violently. The prisoner was seen in the patient's bedroom, and in the presence of the daughter gave something to her to drink. The illness continued during the whole of Thursday, as well as the following day, Mrs. Soames complaining of the sickness and pain in her chest, vomiting every ten or fifteen minutes.

Dr. Whidburn was sent for during the day, and some medicine was given to the sick woman. The prisoner administered a portion of the medicine, and she then took the medicine bottle away with her, and did so every time she gave the medicine. There did not appear to be any abatement of the sickness until just before the death of the unfortunate woman, which happened early on Saturday morning.

An hour before the passing away, she remarked to her daughter that she felt better, when the prisoner said it was time to take her medicine again, and she gave her some. The poor woman was very ill and in great pain immediately, and she said she would not take any more of the medicine, and the prisoner said she must do so, and that it would do her good. The doctor was sent for, and the woman became very much worse, and in a paroxysm of agony she died very shortly. Soon after the funeral the prisoner intimated to Mrs. Naacke that the departed one had borrowed £10 of her, and she produced a paper which she said had been signed by the deceased. It was a promise to pay the bearer £10, which sum was subsequently paid to her.

An attempt having been made to establish cholera as the cause of death, the defending counsel insisted upon it that no positive proof had been given that deceased had died from other than natural causes; and undoubtedly but for the reputation the prisoner had already gained by her association with so many deaths, this aspect of the case might have favoured her; but there was a mighty factor to be reckoned with in the professional evidence adduced by the medical gentleman who had attended the deceased, and the eminent pathologist, Dr. A. Swayne Taylor, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at Guy's Hospital. The latter authority combated the theory of "natural causes," remarking that he never knew of a death from natural disease taking place that was accompanied by such circumstances as were deposed to in the case then being investigated. Colchicum, he added, if given either in repeated doses or in one large dose, would produce a burning sensation in the throat, severe griping in the stomach, nausea, with violent retching and vomiting, thirst and purging. Nothing would relieve the symptoms, but they would

progress until death occurred. The only effectual relief would be to eliminate the poison from the stomach; but after the poison was once absorbed into the system, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to remove it. The professor created a profound impression when he averred that he had frequently discovered that cases of death which had been registered as having been occasioned by cholera, were, in reality, deaths from poison. This he had proved in eight cases where the bodies had been exhumed.

Although the circumstances did not lead to any part of the indictment, there can be no doubt that Wilson had been engaged in her devilish work upon another victim in Mrs. Soames's house, where a person named Dixon lodged. The details of this man's death came out in Dr. Whidburn's evidence. The death of this man took place four months prior to that of Mrs. Soames. During his illness the prisoner, who had interested herself in "the case," told the doctor, in reply to a question from him, that Dixon had been in the habit of taking colchicum for rheumatism, and she was told that it was a very dangerous medicine, and that it should not be administered except under medical supervision, and the prisoner replied that she knew this, and was well acquainted with it. This had no doubt influenced the mind of the doctor when he declined to certify the death of Mrs. Soames, although it appears that, as a result of a post-mortem examination subsequently Dr. Whidburn attributed death to natural causes, and the coroner's jury returned a verdict to that effect.

After a lengthened and most elaborate summing up on the part of the judge (Mr. Justice Byles), and after a two hours' consultation among themselves, the jury pronounced the prisoner guilty.

The prisoner heard the verdict without exhibiting the slightest appearance of emotion, the blood not even rising to her cheeks. Indeed, it would be difficult to reconcile any such characteristic with a woman who must have commanded almost supernatural self-possession to impel her to the sinister deeds which she had committed. When asked in the usual form whether she had anything to say why judgment of death should not be passed upon her according to law, she made no reply, but merely gave a gentle shake of the head.

Mr. Justice Byles, in passing sentence, made a further disclosure of the enormity of the prisoner's guilt, and left her without a hope of mercy. As the facts then divulged by his lordship were of a remarkable character, it will be best that they should be recorded in his own words.

"Catherine Wilson, after a long trial, and a most patient and anxious consideration of every circumstance in your case, the jury have come to the conclusion that you were guilty of this most atrocious crime. It is very seldom that I think it any part of my duty, in a case of this or any other description, to express either concurrence with or dissent from the verdict of a jury; but, upon the present occasion, I am bound to say that, in my opinion, the jury could not have arrived at any other conclusion than they have done, consistently with the facts that were laid before them. I never heard a case where it was so clearly proved that a murder was committed, and where the excruciating pain and agony of the victim were watched with so much deliberation by the murderer. The greatest care was taken during the progress of the trial that nothing should be improperly introduced into the inquiry, and that you should not be prejudiced by anything that had happened before; but now that the jury have delivered their verdict, and there can be no longer any fear that their decision should be in any way improperly influenced, I think it right that the jury should know, and that the public should know, what sort of person it is that the avenging arm of the law has at length overtaken. I find, then, that about the year 1853-54 you were employed in the capacity of a servant or housekeeper to a person named Mawer, who lived at Boston, in Lincolnshire, and that this person was in the habit of taking colchicum. He made his will in the month of April, and by that will he left to you the whole of the little property he possessed. He died in the month of October following. I will say no more about this case, except that it is quite clear that, at this time, you were perfectly well acquainted with the nature and effects of colchicum. In the year 1856, I find that you were living with a young man named Dixon, and that you came to London, and went to lodge with him at the house of the deceased. Dr. Whidburn was called in to attend him. He was not allowed upon this trial to state any of the circumstances connected with the illness of this person, but I may now state that it appears, by his deposition, that Dixon was suddenly taken ill with violent vomiting and purging, that his symptoms were exactly the same as those exhibited by the unfortunate woman, Mrs. Soames, and that he died very speedily afterwards, you yourself representing that he had died of galloping consumption; but upon his body being opened, his lungs were found perfectly healthy. About the year 1859, I find that you were in the habit of visiting a Mrs. Jackson, who also resided in Boston, and that you were aware that she drew from a bank in that town the sum of £120, and that this sum was in her possession. She was taken ill with the same symptoms, and died in four days, and after her death the money was nowhere to be found. It appeared that on this occasion you produced a promissory note, apparently signed by two persons residing at Boston, for the amount that was missing, but it was proved that both these signatures were forgeries. In the month of October, 1860, I find that you were connected with a Mrs. Atkinson, of Kirkby Lonsdale. . . . I have read the depositions in the case most carefully and anxiously, and the result upon my mind is that I have no more doubt that you committed that crime than if I had seen it committed with my own eyes. In 1861 I find you were living with a man named Taylor, and that he was attacked in the same manner as the others to whom I have alluded; but that, fortunately for him, remedies were immediately resorted to, and he recovered. Again, I find that only in the present year you were tried in this court for an attempt to murder, by the administration of sulphuric acid, a woman in whose house you were residing. You were acquitted upon that charge; but, although this was the case, there is too much reason to believe that you were guilty of this crime also; and I am informed that the learned judge who tried you felt it to be his duty to sum up the case most unfavourably to you. These facts, I regret to say, render it extremely probable that the startling statement made by Dr. Taylor in the course of his evidence is correct, and that, in the midst of apparent prosperity and obedience to the law, a dreadful crime is rife in this metropolis—the destruction of life by secret poisoning. Your life is in the hands of the Crown; and I think it right to inform you that, if I am consulted in reference to your case, I shall not feel myself justified in interfering, and that I cannot hold out to you the slightest hope of any commutation of your sentence."

The prisoner, who throughout the whole of the trial had exhibited the utmost sang-froid, did not appear to be in the slightest degree affected by any of the learned judge's address, and when the last dread utterances of the law had fallen from his lips, she walked away from the bar with a firm foot and an unruffled countenance.

The same air of callous indifference, or the same power of suppressing every external sign of inward emotion, was steadfastly maintained throughout the brief remainder of her days, and did not desert her even in that supreme hour when, in the presence of 20,000 persons, she was brought forth on the morning of the 20th of October to undergo the last ignominious penalty of her multiplied crimes upon the scaffold in front of Newgate.

So strong and so universal was the conviction of her guilt, and so deep was the abhorrence of the diabolical means by which her deeds were committed, that no effort of any kind was made in any direction to stay her sentence, or to divert the stern and rigid course of justice. All considerations of sex were in this instance completely merged in horror of the crime, and not a voice was raised to deprecate the justice of her doom.

The wicked and merciless woman was either friendless, or in her extremity was deserted by all whom she had ever known. Making no confession of her guilt, and exhibiting no compunction for her crimes, Catherine Wilson, to all appearances, died without contrition, as she had lived without virtue.

An ignorant judge, hearing a counsel cite the Acts of the Apostles, asked him what these Acts were. The counsel answered, "They are Acts that were passed in the Parliament at Jerusalem."

A barrister entered a hall with his wig very much awry, of which he was not apprised, but endured from almost every observer some remark on its appearance, till, at last, addressing himself to Mr. Curran, he asked him, "Do you see anything ridiculous in this wig?" The answer instantly was, "Nothing but the head."

An attorney, who was much molested by a fellow importuning him to bestow something, threatened to have him up as a common beggar. "A beggar!" exclaimed the man. "I would have you to know that I am of the same profession as yourself! Are we not both solicitors?" "That may be, friend, yet there is this difference—you are not a legal one, which I am."

"Man is an apprentice; pain is his master; and none knows himself so long as he has not suffered."—A. DE MUSSET.

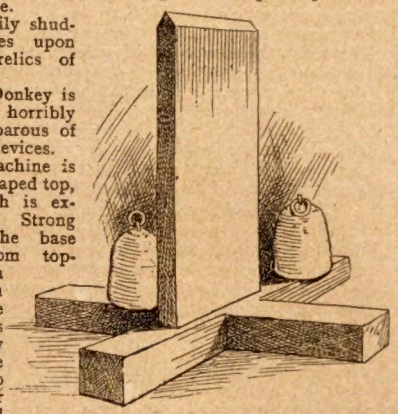
CHAPTER V.

MUTILATION in its most horrible form was constantly the punishment for wrongdoers, whether convicted of great or minor offences, in the days when torture was legal. As a consequence, there were in existence—and some of these instruments are still preserved in museums—a number of frightfully cruel appliances for maiming unfortunate malefactors condemned to laceration by judges who took a delight in inflicting as much pain upon their victims as possible.

One involuntarily shudders as he gazes upon these gruesome relics of bygone ages.

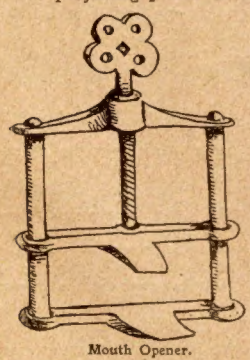
The Spanish Donkey is one of the most horribly ingenious and barbarous of these mutilation devices.

This terrible machine is made with a ∧-shaped top, the edge of which is exceedingly sharp. Strong cross-pieces at the base prevented it from toppling over when the naked victim was placed astride of the donkey's back. Heavy weights were then attached to each of the poor wretch's feet, and these were added to as time went on, according to the severity of the ordeal through which the unhappy prisoner had to pass. Sometimes the torture ended in a comparatively short time, but often the edge cut its way clean through the body of the weird animal's rider, and then the agony ended with death. Spaniards, as we have previously remarked, showed really wonderful ingenuity for inventing instruments of this nature, and the donkey does not damage their reputation for cruelty.



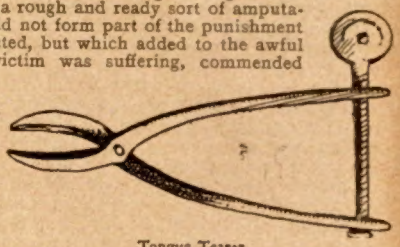
Spanish Donkey.

The tongue tearer which we depict is another of the fearsome devices which come from the land of Dons. It was used on blasphemers and heretics principally, and was so made that it left nothing to chance. The mouth was first prised open with a curious instrument, shaped something like the present-day copying-presses, with the screw, however, working the reverse way. The projecting pieces of iron shown in our illustration were placed between the teeth, the screw then being turned until the mouth was widely distended. The victim, it may be remarked, had previously been bound hand and foot. Then the tearer came into play. Once the grippers, the insides of which were roughened, obtained a hold of the tongue, the screw shown in the illustration was applied with such force that slipping was an unheard of event, and in a moment or so a bleeding, pain-racked prisoner, who would never again have power of speech, would be staggering back to the noisome dungeon where, perhaps, he would end his days. Another tearer was supplied with sharp teeth, and tore the tongue, the most sensitive part of the body, into shreds, the pain inflicted being indescribable.



Mouth Opener.

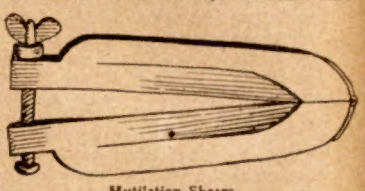
Screws figured in many of these fiendish implements, for the authorities, who always engaged strong men as executioners, made assurance doubly sure by backing up the strength of the men with the power of machinery. In the mutilation shears which our artist has drawn a screw forms a prominent part. This implement was used for breaking off fingers after the bones had been crushed, a rough and ready sort of amputation which, as it did not form part of the punishment ordered to be inflicted, but which added to the awful pain which the victim was suffering, commended itself to the old-time gaolers, who spent their spare time in inventing such things as these.



Tongue Tearer.

It must have been a diabolically cruel ruffian who invented the glazing shears, as they are called. They are made of steel, and are of a much later date than those already described, and are, if possible, even more terrible in their effects. The inside edges are as sharp as razors, whilst the handles are beautifully engraved with figures of Justice, ornamental designs, and inscriptions. The name of the instrument indicates its use, the punishment being something like the Chinese "thousand cuts," by which a malefactor is literally cut to pieces. The executioner who was an expert in the use of the shears could inflict truly awful pain upon his unfortunate victim, and it is recorded that some of them cut away flesh in the form of stars and circles, and other like designs.

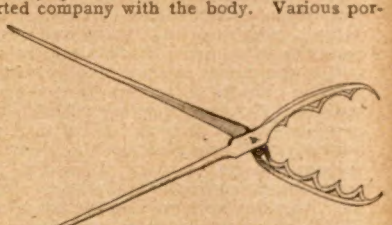
The flesh-tearers depicted in our next illustration carries us back to the old Roman days, when Nero flourished and the great Coliseum rang with the shrieks of tortured Christians, with the roar of wild beasts tearing the martyrs limb from limb, with the exulting shout of the victorious gladiator, or the yells of the multitude, as, with thumbs down, they demanded the death of the vanquished. With these terrible tongs or pincers were culprits and Christians tortured. Entire pieces of flesh were pulled away by these fearsome appliances, which were generally used to take all the skin and muscle off the ribs, chest, and back. To the Romans the implement was known as the "Ungula," whilst by the early Germans it was called the "Ghlave," this latter because of its roughened or teeth-like appearance. Even when the "tearers" were only used to pinch the skin, ghastly wounds were inflicted, for the spur-shaped spikes dug deeply into the flesh and muscle, sometimes reaching the bone. It may be taken for granted that the executioners invariably exerted their utmost strength when employing these tongs, and death frequently followed, for when the torture was ended the unhappy victim was thrown into his reeking dungeon, where his wounds festered and became gangrenous, and then, after prolonged agony, the end would mercifully release the sufferer.



Mutilation Shears.

Torture Shears.

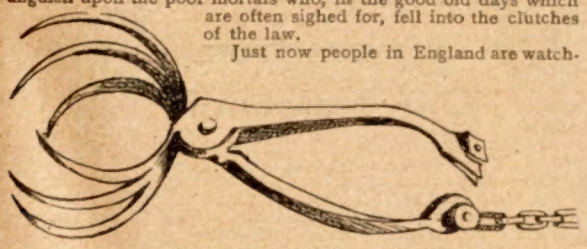
Another of the instruments of ancient Rome is the Iron Spider here shown. One can scarcely conceive a more terrible implement of torture. Shaped something like the insect from which it takes its name, the spider's claws are furnished with sharp edges and points, whilst the powerful handles are made so that not an ounce of the strength exerted may be expended in vain. When the handles were brought together the claws locked together, and any piece of flesh held in that fearful embrace speedily parted company with the body. Various portions of the body were torn away completely by the spider, which were used upon the fleshy parts of the legs, arms, and hips of men, and on the breasts of women, who were horribly mutilated. And this butchery was in the sacred name of Justice!



Flesh Tearer.

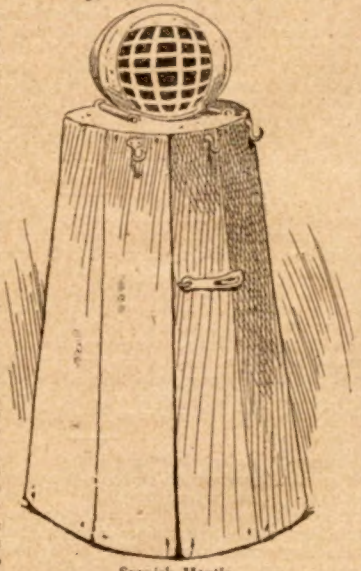
There were pincers specially made with roughened grips for tearing out the nails of the fingers and toes, and for nipping small pieces of flesh from the faces and cheeks of prisoners. There was a "hair-cord," as it is described, which, when put on and rubbed over the

arms and feet, caused a most maddening irritation of the flesh, and numerous other ingenious contrivances for inflicting anguish upon the poor mortals who, in the good old days which are often sighed for, fell into the clutches of the law.



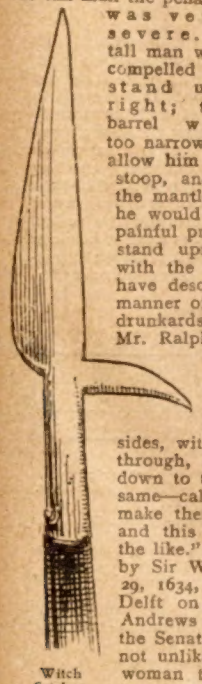
The "Spider."

Just now people in England are watching with interest the new Act dealing with drunkards. The "habitual" is put on the "black list," and debarred from obtaining drink for three years. It is easy to see how effective this is when, in reading the daily papers, one finds that already a number of "black listers" have evaded the Act and have been found drunk after their photos have been circulated. Let us see what they did with the hard drinker in the olden days. The illustration given herewith depicts the "Spanish Mantle," or drunkard's cloak and helmet. As will be seen, it is in the form of a long barrel, slightly larger at the bottom than at the top, and it is made of wood and iron, and is very heavy.



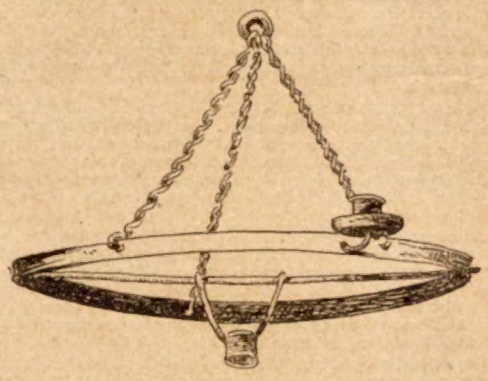
Spanish Mantle.

At the back there is a door, whilst at the top there is an iron-bound opening for the head to come through. The drunkard was placed inside the door, locked, and as his head came through the top the barred helmet was fixed in position. The period of confinement varied according to the offence or its frequency, but the usual sentence was from one to two hours' detention. For very short men the punishment was very mild. It simply meant that he stood perfectly still for an hour or so, but to the tall man the penalty was very severe. A tall man was compelled to stand upright; the barrel was too narrow to allow him to stoop, and as a consequence the whole weight of the mantle fell upon his shoulders. After a time he would be borne down by the weight, but the painful pressure on the knees would cause him to stand upright again. General historians dealing with the social life of England in bygone times have described the wearing of the barrel after the manner of a cloak as a general mode of punishing drunkards in force during the Commonwealth. Mr. Ralph Gardner, of Cheriton, in the county of Norfolk, printed, in 1655, a work in which he says, "He, the deponent, further affirms that he hath seen men drove up and down streets with a great tub or barrel, opened in the sides, with a hole in one end to put their heads through, and so cover their shoulders and bodies down to the small of the legs, and then close the same—called the new-fashioned cloak—and so make them march to the view of all beholders; and this is their punishment for drunkards and the like." It is noticed in "Travels in Holland," by Sir William Brereton, under the date of May 29, 1634, as seen at Delft. John Evelyn visited Delft on August 17, 1641, and writes, "Says W. Andrews in 'Old-Time Punishments,' 'that in the Senate House hangs a weighty vessel of wood, not unlike a butter churn, which the adventurous woman that hath two husbands at one time is to wear on her shoulders, her head peeping out of the top only, and so led about the town as a penance for her incontinence.' John Howard, in his work entitled 'The State Prisons in England and Wales, 1784,' thus writes, 'In Denmark some criminals of the lower sort, as watchmen, coachmen, etc., are punished by being led through the city in what is called 'The Spanish Mantle.' . . . This mode of punishment is particularly dreaded, and is one cause that night robberies are never heard of in Copenhagen."



Witch Catcher.

Thus it appears that the mantle was used as a punishment for nearly all kinds of evildoers. It was, so the old records state, a penalty much feared, for the effect of the confinement and the weight of the mantle lasted a considerable time. It does not commend itself to law-givers of the twentieth century, but doubtless the application of the modern cloak for certain classes of offences would have a salutary effect.



Chandelier.

In the days when witches flourished in the land the law had a very long arm indeed. Everyone at the time was more or less superstitious, and no man would lay his hands on a witch for fear of all sorts of evil spells. Thus, when a sorceress had to be arrested the officer sent to execute the old-time equivalent for our present-day warrant was provided with a long staff, with a spear-shaped head and hook attached. Thus it was unnecessary for him to touch the witch. The iron point was used to accelerate the movements of the captive, whilst the hook was brought into play in order to check the prisoner's speed when it became too fast for the man with the staff. On the iron of the hook a further protection was provided for the catcher for the words, "Jesus Nazarenum and Ave Maria," expected to circumvent the evil machinations of any witch, were inscribed there. Another of these staffs was furnished with a gripper, which acted automatically when pushed against the captive's neck, and effectually prevented any attempt to escape.

The chandelier which we show has a gruesome interest of its own. It was used to light one of the torture chambers at Nuremberg, and has looked down upon countless and hideous atrocities.

Next Week: "Torture by Fire."

Criminal Problems

HOW CRIME ARISES.

TO find the beginning of crime we have to go back to primitive man, or to those now living who most nearly resemble him. Among the savage tribes of the Pacific Islands, among the aborigines of Australia and the inhabitants of Greenland, only three actions are considered criminal, and can, therefore, be taken as the root from which the classification of good or evil actions sprung. These fundamental crimes are treason, incest, and witchcraft; other bad actions, such as murder, theft, and adultery, were, and are, regarded as offences against the individual, and thus not calling for any interference by the community.

It is not hard to understand why treason has always been considered as a criminal action, for it must be remembered that the primitive inhabitants of the earth lived in small tribes, at perpetual warfare with their neighbours. The entering of incest in the normal code of laws appears to be a following of a natural instinct for the preservation of the race in its most virile form; while witchcraft has ever been looked upon as a trafficking with the unseen world, and the witch or wizard has

been punished lest he or she should acquire an unholy control over the tribe. In no case were these offences considered morally sinful, protection being the sole motive which inspired the primitive law-giver.

Starting from this basis, how have other crimes arisen? Simply by the growth of civilisation. Long prior to the institution of the Mosaic Law records may be found of legal codes which give certain values to every crime mentioned in that historic enactment. These offences of which cognisance was taken were, with two notable exceptions, crimes against the person; the exceptions being simple theft and the removing of a neighbour's landmark.

This tells us that in those days civilisation had advanced to such an extent that goods were no longer the common property of the community, and hence had to be protected, and further that certain individuals had acquired possession of plots of land, either by purchase or by force, and were recognised as the owners by the entire tribe. Thus from the advance of civilisation these two crimes arose.

With the introduction of metallic tokens for purposes of purchase came offences against coinage, the principal crime being clipping money. The institution of standard weights and measures brought about the manufacture of false weights and of various methods of defrauding customers. A knowledge of the use of alcohol led to all misdeeds arising from drunkenness and to illicit distilling, and so forth.

Thus every step up the ladder of civilisation, every advance made for the comfort or benefit of mankind, has been the occasion of fresh crimes springing into existence.

HEREDITY AND CRIME.

"IF the child does not inherit the result of all that has gone before, with additional power of development on its own part, all social growth would be rendered impossible—without it there would be an end to all training and development." Thus spoke Dr. W. Carr, a year or two ago, while lecturing on heredity at the University College, London. Scientists have decided that the laws of heredity, that is to say, the transmission of the principal characteristics of the parents to the offspring, hold good in all the politer walks of life; let us see how they operate among the criminal classes. Here is an actual case which illustrates the force with which hereditary tendencies affect criminals.

Jean Chretien was a thief, and for a long time was alike the terror and the despair of the Paris police. He had three sons—Pierre, Thomas, and Jean-Baptiste. All three made the acquaintance of the galleys for theft, though they were educated apart from the evil influence of their father. Pierre had one son, Jean François, who was condemned to hard labour for life for robbery and murder. Thomas had two sons, Martin, condemned to death for murder and robbery, and François, sent to hard labour for the same offence. Martin had one son, who was transported to Cayenne for robbery.

Jean-Baptiste, not content with the criminal taint in his own blood, married Marie Tamé, the daughter of a noted incendiary, and by her had seven children. Three sons died in prison, whither they had been sent for theft; another youth was killed while burgling; two daughters were imprisoned for larceny; and the youngest child married and lived an upright life, but the family failing manifested itself in her only son, who was condemned to death for murder and brigandage. From this it will be seen that the terrible criminal legacy of the grandfather descended through three generations.

The problem of counteracting the effects of heredity is one which has long exercised the minds of criminologists, and as yet no satisfactory solution has been arrived at. No matter what precautions are taken, sooner or later, the taint will manifest itself, and only the strong will of the individual will save the unfortunate man from entering the ranks of the criminal classes. Alas, that strong mind is rarely to be found in those who are cursed with an hereditary inclination to crime.

Take the case of the bank-note forger. His work is the most difficult known to the police. If he employed his undoubted talents legitimately he could command a sufficient income to enable him to take almost any place in society, but, because of the inherent tendency to crime with which he is cursed, he prefers to expend a vast amount of ingenuity in engraving a plate from which he may forge about twenty pounds' worth of notes. Any firm of engravers would willingly pay him double that sum for a simpler and less finished production, and his calling would be an honourable one, but, owing to the fatal strain in his blood, he is unable to realise that, and prefers to live a life of fear and hardship, which is bound in the long run to lead him to prison.

The same may be said of the expert burglar and of the swindler. These men possess talents which, if rightly applied, would command for their owners position and respect, but the hereditary failing is too strong for them and they cannot resist the temptation to commit crimes.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

WHILE a sailor's sentence was being pronounced for a robbery on the highway, he raised a piece of rolled tobacco to his mouth and held it between his teeth. When the sentence was finished he bit off a piece of the tobacco and began to chew it with great concern. "Sirrah!" said the judge, piqued at the man's indifference, "do you know that you are to be hanged shortly?" "So I hear," said the sailor, and squirting a little tobacco juice from his mouth at the same time. "Do you know," rejoined the judge, "where you shall go when you die?" "I cannot tell, indeed," said the sailor. "Why, then," cried the judge, with a tremendous voice, "I will tell you; you will go to hell!" "Then, my lord, I hope I shall have the pleasure of your company there!"

AN Irishman at an assize in Cork was arraigned for felony before Judge Montency. He was asked who he would be tried by. "By no one, by Jasus!" said the prisoner. The gaoler desired him to say, "By God and his country." "Upon my shoul, I will not," said Pat, "for I don't like it at all at all, my dear!" "What's that you say, honest man?" said the judge. "See there now! his lordship—long life to him!—calls me an honest man, and why should I plead guilty?" "What do you say?" said the judge, in an authoritative manner. "I say, my lord, I won't be tried by God, at all, at all, for He knows all about the matter; but I will be tried by your lordship and my country."

AT a trial at the Guildhall between two buckle-makers, on an infringement of patent, the counsel for the plaintiff displayed much rhetoric on the rapid improvement of the arts, and mentioned the invention of his client to public praise, of course, to the protection of the law. In conclusion, looking at his own buckles (then very much worn), he exclaimed, with all the warmth of a sincere advocate, "So elegantly are the ornaments constructed that were my ancestors to rise from their graves and happen to observe my feet how would they be surprised!" "Very true, my learned brother," said the counsel for the defendant, "they would be very much surprised indeed to find you had either shoes or stockings."

A MISER, having lost one hundred pounds, promised ten pounds' reward to anyone who should bring it to him. An honest, poor man, who found it, brought it to the old gentleman, demanding the ten pounds. But the miser, to baffle him, alleged that there was one hundred and ten pounds in the bag when it was lost. The poor man, however, was advised to sue for the money, and when the cause came to be tried it appeared that the seal had not been broken nor the bag ripped. The judge said to the defendant's counsel: "The bag you lost had one hundred and ten pounds in it, you say?" "Yes, my lord," was the reply. "Then," followed the judge, "according to the evidence given in Court this cannot be your money, for here there were only one hundred pounds; therefore the plaintiff must keep it till the true owner appears."

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

YORK.—You win. The original treadmill from York Castle is to be seen at Madame Tussaud's, in Marylebone Road.

QUERY.—Pen-name should be Querulous. We are doing our best, but you cannot cram more into any number of a paper than your paper will hold.

JAMES.—It was Mrs. Manning who was hanged in a black satin dress, and thus made that fabric unpopular.

T.M.L.—1833 was the year in which the death penalty for house-breaking was abolished.

H. GAV.—The second Penal Servitude Act was passed in 1857; the First Juvenile Offenders Act in 1847.

T. R. M.—Your query will be dealt with at great length in a future issue.

TRUTH.—The proportion of persons convicted varies directly with the civilisation of a country. The greater the civilisation the more the apparent amount of crime. This is due to the increase in punishable offences.

MAJOR.—Military prisons were re-established in 1880. Thanks for your kind appreciations.

WARDER.—Wrong. Pentonville Prison was commenced in 1840, and was first occupied in 1842.

Printed and Published by HAROLD FURNISS, at Caxton House, Gough Square, Fleet Street, London.

Sole Agents for the Colonies—GORDON & GOTCH, London; Melbourne; Sydney; Brisbane; Perth, W.A.; Wellington, N.Z.; Christchurch, N.Z.; Cape Town & Durban, S.A.